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# RETROSPECTIONS

OF

## THE STAGE.

BY

THE LATE JOHN BERNARD,  
MANAGER OF THE AMERICAN THEATRES,  
AND FORMERLY  
SECRETARY TO THE BEEF-STEAK CLUB.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:  
HENRY COLBURN AND RICHARD BENTLEY,  
NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1830.

LONDON:  
PRINTED BY SAMUEL BENTLEY,  
Docket Street, Fleet Street.

## THE EDITOR'S ADVERTISEMENT.

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THE late Mr. John Bernard, on his retirement from the Stage and return to England, in 1820, commenced the writing of his history, comprising a period of forty-six years' connection with theatricals in England, Ireland, and America. This work was completed about a year previously to his death, but in too voluminous a state for publication. Like all autobiographies, it was a narrative of the feelings and opinions, as well as the events, of his life; of which having passed the last five-and-twenty years in America, he had in some measure outlived his contemporary generation. To an English reader, therefore, his biography did not possess the nominal interest which has recommended the recollections of so many of



his professional brethren, and was pleasing only in the proportion that it spoke of others rather than himself.

Mr. Bernard was advised to meet this circumstance by a proper condensation of his pages, rather than content himself with the solitary recompense he had received in the pleasure of their composition. But this was a task he had neither health nor spirits to undertake, and was averse to, from the value he naturally placed upon those details even which were less interesting to others. At his death, the MS. fell into my hands, to be consigned either to the flames or the press. Convinced that it contained a great body of theatrical anecdotes, which had failed to float down the stream, I did not consider it my duty to oppose the Son to the Editor, and prevent their diffusion in an agreeable form among my own generation. I have accordingly subtracted the same, with no more personal detail than was absolutely necessary to their historical connection, and

now present them as a series of views of dramatic life, as well as curious illustrations of the eccentricities of character, which surround the steps and engage the sympathies of the Comedian.

In so doing, as the original MS. was traced by the feeble finger of seventy, I may have committed some little inaccuracies as to names and places, which the loss of my father prevented my correcting at the time, and my ignorance of other authorities has closed my eyes to since. The less pardonable fault of retaining in these pages what has been *recollected* by others, or venturing upon the distinct iteration of common-places, I am less fearful of being charged with ; and so that I succeed in providing my reader with materials for a series of hearty laughs (in this truly miserable era of the world), I confess my faith in his good-humour to forgive me for many sins of commission and omission inadvertently perpetrated.

W. BAILE BERNARD.



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I WAS born at Portsmouth in 1756. My father was a lieutenant in the Navy, related to the governor Bernard, who figures in American history. My mother was the daughter of a



sought as an amusement what I afterwards adopted as a profession.

My parents having sent me to a Latin grammar academy near Chichester, the first active exhibition of my feelings took place on the eve of our holidays, when our learned and indulgent domine, Mr. Low, used invariably to fall into that amiable failing so prevalent among pedagogues, of getting up a play. I had early distinguished myself at school as a good reader ! Nature had favoured me with a pleasant voice and an acute ear ; which is, in fact, the secret of public reading or speaking ; and on every occasion that a dramatic performance took place, I acquitted myself with a spirit and propriety which neither my companions could emulate, nor the spectators account for. Mr. Low praised, but did not suspect—the cause was, as yet, unrevealed to myself ; these praises, however, afforded fuel to the flame. The last misdemeanour of the sort that I was concerned in, is worth remembering.

When it was known that I was going to leave school (I was then about sixteen), it was deter-

mined by the scholars that the play should be selected in the ensuing holidays: with particular reference to myself, Mr. Low decided on Hamlet—I was to enact the Dane!

The play, after undergoing an indictable degree of “cutting and maiming,” to adapt it to the capacity of our actors and theatre, (an experiment very like Mr. Colman’s fanciful illustration of “crowding the Archbishop of Brobdignag into Tom Thumb’s pantaloons,”) was put into rehearsal, and the parts given out. Mine being the longest and most important, I received a fortnight in advance. My companions, I remember, had very little sleep for that fortnight. It was my custom to read over my part as often as I could during the day, and to stamp and bellow it out all the night on the boards of my bed-room. This was very inconvenient to drowsy youngsters who had no admiration for Shakspeare, or, what was more difficult, my conception of him—but mine was a “privileged madness,”—and “I’m studying my part,” was the only answer they could get, however tenderly they implored me to let them

partake a little of the peace I so liberally dispensed to the ghost.

Every body knows the way in which these affairs used to be got up at schools; a good many have partaken in them. The school-room was the theatre—the forms became the boxes—each boy was apportioned his peculiar modicum of labour, according to his taste and ability—one to paint scenes, another to erect the stage, another to cut out clothes—our friends liberally assisting us with the means for all.

At length the play was perfect. The theatre completed, our friends (my mother excepted) were duly notified, and the evening came. Two amateurs commenced the entertainments with a duet on the flute and fiddle, and then the curtain rose. Thanks to Mr. Low, who was not the worst manager I have met in my time, the actors had been all pretty carefully drilled, and we now stood at the wings, with our hearts thumping up into our throats, anticipating the delight we should give to our friends and ourselves.

All went on and went off very smoothly, with

the usual allowances, and the usual applause, until the scene with the Ghost,—(which was assumed by a knock-knee'd lathy stripling of my own age,)—when a bungling rascal, whose post for the night was to sit above on a beam, and pull up the three baize table-cloths tacked together into a curtain, leaning forward to gain a better view of what was going on below, caught his breeches in the nail that sustained the end of the curtain, and at the moment I pronounced the words “Alas, poor Ghost !” the roller becoming disengaged, descended with a swift thwack upon the Royal Dane’s head, and prostrated him to the earth amidst an uproar of laughter.

I, very luckily, standing a little in advance, escaped the same fate ; the curtain was speedily pulled up, but the scene could not proceed ; the merriment of the audience had converted my humbled companion’s pain into rage, and with the problem of his materiality sufficiently solved, (for though some one jokingly remarked when he came on, that he wanted life in the character, he now proved he was a tolerable spirit,) he lay

on the stage, and roared aloud like a town crier. This served but to increase the laughter, and my situation soon became as unpleasant as his. I could neither go on, or go off; it was as difficult to retain my part as my countenance; I thought it would have been compromising my dignity to have descended to the common-place of helping him on his legs, and he seemed determined not to rise without assistance. Mr. Low, who prompted, then spoke at the wings—"Charles, get up, sir; rise, Charles, instantly;" but, alas! he was no wizard on this occasion,—he could not raise a ghost. The laughter now swelled into comparative thunder,—Mr. Low poked forward his head, stamped and shouted,—I trembled and stared,—the boy roared and kicked! At length, Hamlet was compelled to stoop to his assistance, and enable, in a dutiful manner, the battered shadow of his sire to limp off to the shades for refreshment!

On my return home, my inclination for the stage began to ripen every hour into active maturity: the applauses I had received in the youthful Dane, (however qualified in their

amount of pleasure by the accident just related,) shot a fire into my heart that was never to be extinguished; and the theatre being open in Portsmouth, afforded the means of its nourishment. My time was for the present uncontrolled, as, my father being at sea, my mother was incapable of determining upon my future employments; and the leisure which this interim gave me, strengthened the heat of my feelings till they became intolerable, and I sought out some means of relief. This did not cost me much time or trouble. In the neighbourhood of Portsmouth are several villages, of which Farnham was by no means the most important, either in a geographical or intellectual point of view. There, however, I was casually informed, that a dramatic wanderer (well known in the West of England), Manager Jackson by name, had pitched his tent, and to the Red Cow, or the Black Bull, or some other agricultural beast, I bent my steps. I soon discovered him in the village, by perceiving a flag flying from the upper windows of an inn, on which was inscribed the words "Jackson's Theatre," and which, I

afterwards learnt, performed the double office of an advertisement by day, and the triumphal banner of a king or hero at night.

On the steps of the door I encountered the old man, a silver-haired Adam Winterton; and well I remember the awe and veneration with which I approached him. The peculiar feature of this veteran's history (upon which he piqued himself) was, that in his youth he had been an underling at Drury Lane, and delivered messages upon the same boards, that Barton Booth with his mathematical movements, had electrified the Pit, Colley Cibber made mugs at the Gallery, and the Mercurial Wilks stuck his arms a-kimbo at the Boxes, and wagging his elbows like a pair of wings, achieved the *ne plus ultra* of antique dandyism.

I expressed my wishes in a very few words, and he, as briefly, his willingness to gratify them. I wanted to play George Barnwell, and promised I would fill his house by way of remuneration. He requested me to name the night, and first rehearsal, then desired to show me over his theatre, and introduce me to his company.

His theatre — stop — he had engaged the largest room at the said Black Bull, suspended a collection of green tatters along its middle for a curtain, erected a pair of paper screens right-hand and left for wings; arranged four candles in front of said wings, to divide the stage from the orchestra, (the fiddlers' chairs being the legitimate division of the orchestra from the Pit,) and with all the spare benches of the inn to form Boxes, and a hoop suspended from the ceiling, (perforated with a dozen nails, to receive as many tallow candles,) to suggest the idea of a chandelier; he had constructed and embellished what he denominated a Theatre! The scenery consisted of two drops, simply and comprehensively divisible into the inside of a house, and the outside of a house. The former (which was an original of about the same date as the manager) was a *bonâ fide* representation at bottom of a kitchen, with all the culinary implements arranged about it; but by the simple introduction of two chairs and a table, this was constituted a gentleman's parlour! and in the further presence of a crimson-cushioned,



yellow-legged elbow chair, with a banner behind, and a stool in front, was elevated into a royal hall of audience ! This was clever stage managing. The other drop (which I have termed outside of a house) was somewhat younger than its companion, and very ingeniously presented on its surface two houses peeping in at the sides, a hill, a wood, a stream, a bridge, and a distant plain ; so that, from the general indistinctness of the whole, the eye of the spectator might single out a particular feature, and, agreeably to the locality of the scene that was passing, imagine himself in a street, a wood, by a stream, &c. alternately. This was also a very clever contrivance ; the manager, at least, disencumbered himself of four scenes by it, and with the chair and table manœuvring, did without two. I can not remember now the condition of his wardrobe, but I have some general impression of its consistency with the above. If Mr. Pope's idea of beauty applied as forcibly to the Drama as it does to females,—“ when unadorned, it is adorned the most,”—then Ma-

nager Jackson's theatre displayed the goddess in the full perfection of her charms.

The Company consisted of a heavy man, who played the tyrants in tragedy, and the French horn in the orchestra (not the first actor who has blown his own trumpet);—Mr. Jackson, prompter, money-taker, scene-painter, machinist, and fiddle-player, who was a company in himself, inasmuch as, being letter-perfect in every stock-play, he could carry on all the mechanical duties of the house, and play ten parts a-night with facility, *behind the scenes*,—this was a general practice at that time;—the “walking gentleman” (a Romeo at night, but the apothecary by day), who sung a little, did the lovers, danced hornpipes, and played tricks;—a low comedian—low enough, Heaven knows!—a fat fusby little woman his wife, and Mrs. Jackson, who had the choice of every thing, but being an old woman, naturally selected the young ones. With this band of dramatic desperadoes, Manager Jackson performed the witches' ceremony of “double, double toil and trouble,”

and three times a-week put William Shakspeare on the rack, to the delight of the red-headed bumpkins of Hampshire.

To proceed :—I rehearsed the character of Barnwell with the above-mentioned worthies, and was perfect. I then communicated my design to every acquaintance I had in Portsmouth ; and, agreeably to my promise, on the night of the performance the room was crowded “ to an overflow ;” my success was so flattering, that two or three of my companions proposed to join me in a second exhibition. “ Venice Preserved” was decided on as the play, and half-a-dozen more volunteered to perform the conspirators. These doings we carefully concealed from our parents, and another crowded room was in embryo for Manager Jackson.

By some infamous treachery or villanous mischance, the secret got wind, and reached the ears of our mothers, who, being mostly acquainted, went round to each other, and held a consultation upon the subject, as grave as that of so many physicians. The result of this “ debate profound” was a resolution to obtain

ocular evidence of the fact (so little inclined were some of them to believe it), but to shroud from our knowledge meanwhile the slightest suspicion of their design. Thus the night came, and with it our loving mothers to Farnham, cackling and worrying like so many hens when they see a brood of goslings going into the water. With great secrecy, but some difficulty, they obtained seats (on paying their sixpences) at the extremity of the room, in a situation completely shrouded from the view of the stage, and there sat down, a formidable phalanx, behind cow-boys and town-boys, to witness their naughty boys' conduct. I (being the Jaffier of the evening) commenced the play with the obdurate Priuli, and was rather startled to hear my name pronounced aloud, in reply to my first speech; nevertheless, as my eye could not confirm the cowardly insinuations of my car, I proceeded without alarm; each of my companions was greeted in the same manner on his appearance, by his wonder-struck parent; but as the same feeling that forced out the exclamation sealed up the lips that uttered it, the

play received no interruption—we entertained no fears—the applause was tumultuous—all went on very smoothly :—this was a deceitful calm. The bosoms of the venerated ladies all this time were fermenting to an overflow : they only waited for the opportunity,—they did not want the will,—they were green and smiling volcanoes on the eve of an explosion ; or, like so many full-charged electrical machines, only wanting a conductor to give us a shock. The applause that stimulated us enraged them : it had the appearance of encouraging our wickedness, and setting their wishes at defiance. The more we stamped and strutted, the more they winced and fidgeted,—thus an unexpected climax was approaching. When the conspirators' scene came on, our acting grew to be so much like earnest, that at the instant each clapped his hand upon his sword and Pierre waved his weapon aloft, up they rose with a simultaneous scream, in the full conviction we were going to cut one another's throats, and overturning all who sat before them, ploughmen or gentlemen, darted towards the stage, calling

out our names. An immediate rout among us was the consequence, and a general uproar in the assembly. But an explanation soon ensued, and flight or resistance was impossible. The room had no doors at the extremity of the stage, and it would have cost us our necks had we jumped from the windows. Singled out by the sharp eye of maternal tenderness, in an instant we were seized with an adamant security. Lightning could not have been more expeditious than their movements, or, as respected ourselves, more paralyzing in its effects.

In the eyes of the audience were we then compelled (as far as decency permitted) to strip off our borrowed plumes, and with the paint on our faces (absorbed in the redder glow of our shame) had we to penetrate the screeching crowd, which, but a few minutes previously, had given us the hearty tokens of their admiration. But this was not all: from the inn room, the affair communicated below, and flew round the village before we had descended the stairs. Then each, grasped by the relentless fingers of his dam, was obliged to run the gauntlet of the

mob, walked publicly back to Portsmouth, followed by the whoopings of half a hundred urchins, and subjected to the horse-laugh of every bumpkin we passed.

In order to wean me from my newly discovered propensity for acting, my mother wisely resolved to remove me from the scene of its indulgence, and accordingly took me with her on a visit to some relatives at Maidstone, where she proposed remaining till my father arrived in port, from its proximity to his destination, Sheerness. His return had been long expected, and his opinion was to decide my fate. In passing through Chichester, by a very agreeable mischance, the wheel of our chaise broke down, and as it could not be repaired until the ensuing morning, I obtained an evening's leisure and release from my mother's side. In walking down the town, the first thing I looked for was a play-bill; and the first thing I observed, on discovering one, was an announcement of *Richard the Third*, by a Mr. G. F. Cooke, then a young man of about two-and-twenty, evidently new to his profession, and perfectly unknown. This

was the man who slumbered away the morning and noon of his existence in theatres of the above description, and came to London (the only fit arena of his talents) to exhibit but the radiance of a setting-sun. Being the first tragedian I ever saw, whatever I might say in his praise on this occasion, I am afraid, would be set down to the score of first impressions; and to enter into an investigation of his maturer merits, would indeed be a trite affair for the present generation. Forty years after this period, when I encountered him in America for the first time, I observed that what he had lost in passion, he had made up in judgment. The recollection of Cooke in this character brings a circumstance to my mind that my reader may be disposed to smile at.

In some country town where the tragedian was performing, he got a suit of clothes from a tailor, which he promised to pay for on his benefit night. The tailor, much to the annoyance of his family and customers, was bit with a dramatic madness, and proposed to Cook that, instead of receiving money for his goods, the



former should give him permission to play Catesby to his Richard, that being the character fixed on for the evening. Cooke was overjoyed at so easy a mode of discharging the debt, and undertook to instruct him in the stage business. The tailor had a tolerable voice, and, with some exertion, prepared himself for the experiment, to Mr. Cooke's satisfaction. When the awful hour rolled on, all the taste and intellect of the town was assembled to witness the important *début*. The tailor, fiery as his own goose, and stiff as a piece of buckram, appeared and disappeared, and spouted and stamped, agreeably to the most orthodox rules, amongst amateurs, of satirizing nature. He gained applause however, and that in cleverer people has too often been a test of merit; —but the critical moment was to come. For the tent scene, Catesby, as well as Richard, had screwed up all his energies to make a decisive hit; and when Richard started from his knees, (at the conclusion of his comments on the dream,) exclaiming, "Who's there?" the lord of the scissars and thimble rushed on, intending to

overwhelm him with the startling intelligence of his manner. Cooke, on the contrary, threw such lightning into his glance, that the cabbage-loving amateur was overpowered himself, and stammering out the beginning of his answer, abruptly concluded it in the middle,—“ ’Tis I, my Lord ; the early village-cock ——”

The whimsical sense of the sentence obtained from the audience an appropriate shout, whilst the poor tailor stood rooted to the spot, trembling and speechless ! Cooke surveyed the stultified aspect of his officer several seconds, with a sardonic grin, as though enjoying his agony,—and at length growled out, in a tone very audible at the wings, “ Why the devil don’t you crow, then ?”

My father’s ship (the *Renown*) arriving at Sheerness soon after our arrival at Maidstone, we went over to meet him, and proceeded to London, to pass there the interim of his remaining in port, as it would enable him to kill two birds with one stone—enjoy the company of his family, and try his interest for me at the Admiralty ; it being his wish that I should make

the sea my profession. In this object (very much to my satisfaction) he failed, and ultimately decided with my mother that I should go down to Portsmouth and be articted to a respectable attorney-at-law of that place.

During my stay in the metropolis, I went frequently to the theatres. At Drury Lane I remember seeing "Jane Shore," on the evening that a Mrs. Canning, the widow of an eminent counsellor, made her *début* in the heroine. She was patronised by numerous persons of distinction, and the house was very favourable towards her. But, independently of the personal interest which attended her attempt, Mrs. Canning put forth claims upon the approbation of the critical. One thing, however, must be admitted; she was wonderfully well supported: Garrick was the Hastings, and Reddish (her future husband) the Dumont. I little thought, as I sat in the pit that night, an ardent boy of sixteen, that I then beheld the lady who was destined, at some fifteen years' distance, to become the leading feature in a company of my own; nor that, in the *Glos'ter* of the night, (admirably

acted by Jefferson,) I beheld my partner in that management—Plymouth.

I should puzzle myself to little purpose if I were to attempt, in this place, to say any thing that was new or amusing upon Mr. Garrick's merits; for since their character became the property of history, every writer seems to have made his memory a kind of "intellectual tumuli," and thrown his own "stone" on it to enlarge its dimensions; but I should wish to be permitted a word in regard to Reddish, (upon whose first wife, being a very masculine woman, Foote made the ungallant pun of "horse-radish,") for the reason that he was one among many of Garrick's contemporaries, who foundering in the stream of time, instead of going down with it, deserves to be "lightered" up to the surface.

Reddish had, altogether, the greatest genius for the "Villains of the Stage" the stage, in my humble opinion, ever possessed. I have seen other actors equal to him in particular characters, but none that exhibited (in this peculiar department) his general excellence. Cooke in

the satiric and jovial villain; Macklin in the ferocious and revengeful; Mossop in the haughty and dignified; Palmer in the specious and insinuating; and Henderson in the reasoning and theorizing, were equally admirable; but Reddish had conception and powers to embody them all, and, had he but lived, would have manifested this fact to posterity. The early deaths both of Reddish, Powel, and Henderson, are no doubt the reason of the little acquaintance which people in the present day have with their merits:—they had arrived at the maturity of their powers, but not of their fame. Henderson's is a particular case: he departed at the very instant he was emerging from the shade into which the memory of Garrick threw him. It was the one orb rising where the other set, and the twilight of the one obscuring the spreading beam of the other. Henderson was the legitimate successor to his throne,—the only attendant genius that could wear his mantle. Though it is difficult to compare the others, owing to the peculiarity of their paths, Powel was best in the Romans and fathers, Holland in

the ardent spirits of lovers and champions, the Hotspurs and Chamonts, and Jefferson in the kings and tyrants. Of the four, Powel and Reddish were the cleverest. But Reddish was differently situated; he lived in Garrick's time, and was one of the many stars in that Augustan era of acting, whose radiance was absorbed in the great luminaries. Powel, Holland, and Jefferson were all in the same predicament; Moscop, Barry, and Sheridan, were the only ones who rose into notice from a collision with the Roscius; but even their memories are fading.

Jefferson told me a story of Reddish's engagement by Garrick, which exhibits, in a striking manner, the acuteness of "little David's" perceptions. Garrick was in want of a "walking gentleman;" and Frank Aikin enjoyed the fame of being the best out of London. Frank was playing in a company at some distance from town, and Garrick, wanting to ramble somewhere for the summer, thought he would kill two birds with a stone, and go down to see him. Arrived at the place in question, Garrick, as usual, encountered acquaintances, and received

invitations. Aikin, having a note from him explaining his design, got himself put in for Sir John Melville, in the "Clandestine Marriage," which is about the best "walking gentleman" in the drama; at night Garrick came with a party, and took possession of a box; during the scene between Fanny and the Maid, which was rather badly acted, the manager kept thumping his stick, fidgeting in his seat, and turning round to talk; but when Reddish (who played Lovewell) called out, behind the scenes, "William! William!" Garrick involuntarily dropped his stick, and exclaimed, "That man's an actor!" so true a conductor was his ear to his feelings of the touch of nature. The conclusion of this circumstance was about as remarkable as its commencement. Aikin, whom he came to engage, Garrick neglected; and Reddish, whom he had never heard of before, he engaged, at a liberal salary, to play Powel's business, then about to leave him.

I went also, one evening, to see Barry in *Othello*. It would certainly be rather dull, in the present day, to revive the question of com-

parison between him and Garrick ; but, deep as is my devotion to the fame of the “ great English actor,” I must admit that his partizans fell upon their own weapons, in the indiscriminate fury with which they assailed his opponent. These persons were in the habit of allowing Barry every physical, and denying him every mental qualification. They sneered at him as the silver-toned lover, the elegant automaton, &c. and yet were sagacious enough to admit, that he played *Othello* very well ; not considering that *Othello*, containing in itself all the highest and most opposite elements of tragic character, requires greater abilities to do it justice, than any or all of Shakspeare’s other conceptions : to say, therefore, that a man plays *Othello* well, is to pronounce the very highest eulogium ; it is to affirm, that he achieves the loftiest flight of Shakspeare’s genius, and bodies forth the *chef-d’œuvre* of the British Stage.

However, I shall attempt no detail of this great actor’s performance of so great an undertaking. He was now at an advanced age, but was not deficient in the most excusable respects,



either power or spirit. It will be more amusing, if I select one or two points in his performance, which my memory has never relinquished, and, presenting them to my reader, pass on to other matters.

His gradual preparation for the volcanic burst of—"I'll tear her all to pieces," and the burst itself, in its exquisite agony, as well as power, surpassed the grandest of the effects which the Stage in those days saw so frequently. You could observe the muscles stiffening, the veins distending, and the red blood boiling through his dark skin—a mighty flood of passion accumulating for several minutes—and at length bearing down its barriers, and sweeping onward in thunder, love, reason, mercy, all before it. The females, at this point, used invariably to shriek, whilst those with stouter nerves grew uproarious in admiration; for my own part, I remember that the thrill it gave me took away my sleep the entire night. The very antithesis of this, was the manner in which he gave the words, "Oh, Desdemona—away—away—away!" Instead of blustering them out,

as I have mostly seen done by a gentleman with a bosom of adamant and lungs of leather, he looked a few seconds in Desdemona's face, as if to read her feelings and disprove his suspicions ; then, turning away, as the adverse conviction gathered in his heart, he spoke them falteringly, and gushed into tears.

I believe it to be a subtle reverse of the fact, in the couplet that compared Garrick and Barry's King Lear, which ended with—

“ To Barry they gave loud huzzas,  
To Garrick only tears.”

Barry's pathos was much superior in effect to Garrick's; and this was owing to the advantages of his voice. If the flash came but dimly from his eye, you were always charmed with the report.

The following anecdote records the greatest compliment, I conceive, which that genuine criterion of nature, sympathy, ever paid to public genius.

When Barry had finished his address to the senators, three rounds of applause spoke the feelings of the house ; and when the Duke, in

comment on his apology, observed, “ I think this tale would win my daughter too?” the audience sympathized so truly with the feelings of the speaker, that their hands, by a spontaneous effect, came again together, as their hearts had done before, and the applause went round a fourth time, in echo of his sentiment.

## CHAPTER II.

1773.—The Comedian's Hegira.—Bath.—Anecdote of Henderson.—Bristol and Mr. Bensley.—Experimentalizing.—Bensley's School.—Tale of his Wig.—Chew Magna.—My public début.—Manager Thornton, the Provincial Eccentric. Recollections of him: his Shirts.—Scotch dress.—Histrionic Principle.—Anecdote.—“ Richard's himself again !”

ON my return home to Portsmouth, the wishes of my family were carried into effect, and I was established with a solicitor upon very advantageous terms. But a short period elapsed, however, before the current, thus attempted to be stemmed or diverted, (having gained strength by my amusements in London,) broke down its barriers, and swept away all the prospects my poor parents had so fondly contemplated.

I was now, in a very literal sense of the word, “ acting mad.” I had witnessed the efforts of

the greatest masters of the art, and, with the permissible vanity of a boy, conceiving myself possessed of a portion of their genius, I calculated upon a share of their good fortune. I was not long therefore in coming to a decision. My parents' consent I knew it was impossible to obtain; my father would have thundered at the bare suspicion of my wishes, louder than a thirty-six pounder. He was by no means a classical man, and could draw no distinction between a stage and a booth. Luckily, he was at this time at sea; and as he would not approve, he could not obstruct my intention. My mother would have objected to such an employment as acting, if merely on account of its itinerancy. I was her favourite son, and she was never happy but when I was in her presence.

My only course was, therefore, to dispense with what I could not obtain, and go about my business in a quiet and resolute manner. I accordingly wrote letters to my mother and my employer, expressive both of my regret and my intentions; and on the 5th of May 1773, about five o'clock in the morning, I have to

date the "Hegira" of a country Comedian, from his paternal roof, in search of an engagement.

On this occasion, I attired myself in my best blue suit of clothes; had a watch in my fob, about five pounds in my pocket, (the accumulation of my weekly allowance,) two shirts and two pair of stockings in a bundle, with a light heart, a burning brain, a slim, genteel figure, and a weak, ladylike voice.

My chamber-window looking into the street, I had no difficulty in descending upon a rope-ladder, (which by the contrivance of a counter-string was pulled up again,) without giving an alarm either to our house-dog or the servants. I then took to my heels, and ran along the Southampton road, till overtaken by the night-coach from London, when I jumped up and proceeded in safety.

My intention was to go to Bristol, where the Theatre had been opened for the summer by Mr. Bensley of Covent Garden; having heard of this gentleman such a favourable character, that I conceived it was merely necessary I

should acquaint him with my wishes, to obtain their immediate gratification.

Arriving at Bath, I delayed my journey to visit the Theatre, which boasted at this time the best company out of London,—Henderson, Edwin, Dimond, Diddear, Blisset, &c. The Bath audience had long maintained the character of being the most elegant and judicious in the kingdom; and the “School,” which gradually famed under their influence and the exertions of Mr. Palmer, obtained the preeminence in the eyes of the Dramatic tyro and the London critic. It is well known that, for many years, the very name of Bath was a guarantee for a man’s good taste in his profession; whilst, on the score of genius, it is acknowledged to have contributed more largely to the metropolitan boards, than Dublin and York put together.

The play was “Much Ado about Nothing.” Henderson was the Benedict—Edwin the Dogberry—Garrick and Parsons were the only persons in the world who would have grown serious at such a performance. Of Edwin, as we

were afterwards associated in Bath, I shall defer speaking; and perhaps the most agreeable mention I can make of Henderson, will be the record of his humour on an evening shortly previous to that in question.

During the preceding winter, Count Rice and Mr. Du Barry, two broken-down men of fortune and fashion, had come to Bath to establish a gambling-house on the high scale of luxury and refinement which distinguishes those man-traps in Paris: their manners were a passport into the society they sought; and as Bath abounded both with money and *ennui*, the speculation succeeded. They lived under the same roof, and Count Rice was married to an exceedingly beautiful woman. Some circumstance very improperly filled his head with a suspicion that one of his partners had taken an undue liking for the other, and an intercepted but misinterpreted letter stamped the fact with confirmation. In a few minutes, he was convinced that he and his partners represented the precise figure of a triangle. Burning with revenge and indignation, he provided pistols and



a postchaise, and hastily summoning Du Barry from an evening party, compelled him to accompany him a short distance out of town, where he produced the letter, and demanded immediate satisfaction. Du Barry was so astonished at the charge, that he could offer no explanation ; which Rice interpreting as an evidence of his guilt, designated his conduct by such terms, that the former grew as furious as himself—seized a pistol—they fired together, and Rice was killed. Du Barry instantly returned to Bath, and surrendered himself to justice ; an investigation took place, and he was acquitted. The duel occurred on a Tuesday, and Henderson on the Friday following, (as it was never before, and never has been since,) played Falstaff ; and when he came to the soliloquy on “ Honour,” and inquired “ Who hath it ?” he cleverly introduced—“ He that died on Tuesday last ;”—the house received it with an uproar of approbation.

The next morning I proceeded to Bristol ; and when I had arranged my appearance at the inn, went to the Theatre with a note for Mr.

Bensley, requesting the favour of an interview. Luckily, no rehearsal prevented the celebrated "stock dignitary" attending to my wishes. I was shown into the manager's room, lumbered with books, banners, helmets, playbills, and pictures, and in a few minutes Mr. Bensley stalked in, with all the solemn ponderosity for which, in *Wolsey*, he had so often drawn down the Olympian thunders of Covent Garden. After the usual preliminaries of nose and thorax, head, hat, and handkerchief, I disclosed the object of my visit, but it was with much circumlocution, and a terrible impediment in my speech, owing to the eagle glance and awe-inspiring dignity of the personage I stood before. The point I arrived at was this—that I was a young gentleman who wished to make the stage my profession—and thought I could play *Hamlet*. Mr. Bensley requested a speech. I accordingly got up, with my heart thumping in my throat, resorted to my nose as a mode of collecting my senses, rolled my eyes about "in a fine frenzy," threw myself in an attitude, and began, "To be or not to be." Notwithstanding I had roused

all my energies for this attempt, the searching scrutiny of the manager begat a confusion that surrounded their fire with an impervious smoke, and my over-excitement defeated the effect it was intended to produce. When I had reached the query of "to die—to sleep?—no more," it was evident my ideas were illustrating the position; and on dozing on a little farther, Hamlet and I stuck together at the "rub," though from different causes.

Mr. Bensley, who had been sitting in judgment on my efforts, with the stern, stonelike attention of a Roman Consul, or (with less poetry and more truth) in the sad silence of a sympathizing butcher, who watches the last convulsions of a desperate calf, now rose up with very friendly decision, and with one or two strokes of his too-dreaded tongue, put me out of my agony.

He conceived that my enterprise was not to be approved of; that I was wrong to leave a home and settled employments, for the precarious subsistence of the stage; that only men of extraordinary merit were known to succeed;

that even *he* was not as well off as he ought to have been ; and that I did not appear to present any pretensions whatever to warrant the sacrifices I should be compelled to make. He accordingly recommended my immediate return home, and offered me an order, if I should like to visit the theatre that night.

The candour and good-feeling of the above remarks I fully admitted even then, when most inclined to deny their justice ; and considering the exhibition he must have witnessed, I do not wish the subsequent events of my life to throw any slur upon the depth of Mr. Bensley's penetration.

Bensley, as an actor, was one of the most genuine perpetuations of that school which Garrick succeeded in subverting. Nature had favoured him with a good person, but denied him as great a requisite in his voice ; it was a low inflexible growl, which was by no means improved, if relieved, by the falsetto snuffle of his upper note. The system to which he belonged considered dignity to consist a good deal in cutting the stage at right angles, with the head

up and brows down; a coldly correct enunciation, and a full flowing-wig! Cherry once told me a story of him, when playing in Ireland, that is amusing; it illustrates how rigidly he regarded the proprieties of the stage.

When he came on one evening for his first soliloquy in Richard, a nail at the wing caught the tail of his majestic wig, and dismounting his hat, suspended the former in the air. An Irish gallery know how to laugh, even in a tragedy. Bensley caught his hat as it fell by a feather, and replacing it on his nob, "shorn of its beams," advanced to the front, and commenced his soliloquy, amidst a volley of importunities to resume his wig.—("Mr. Bensley, my darling, put on your jasey—bad luck to your politicks—will you suffer a whig to be hung?" &c.)—The tragedian, however, considering that such an act would have compromised, in some measure, his dukely dignity, continued his meditations in despite of their advice, and stalked off at the conclusion, as he had stalked on. An underling then made his appearance, and released his captured hair, with which he exited in pursuit

of Richard, to as loud a demonstration of approval as Richard himself.

The disappointment of my views with Mr. Bensley had stunned, but not paralyzed me. On the contrary, my situation in an unknown city, a hundred miles from home, stimulated me to exertion. I accordingly took a reasonable lodging in the city, and began to inquire into the nature of theatricals in its vicinity. A Mr. Thornton, who governed a band of dramatic desperadoes at the village of Chew Magna, I discovered, was the nearest manager, and to him I determined to apply. It was my fortune, however, to encounter at my residence a very facetious fellow, who belonged to a "spouting club;" and this person informed me, that the manager had promised to attend its next meeting (being in want of recruits), where he would introduce me, and enable Mr. Thornton to form an opinion of my merits. A more favourable means towards the end I had in view, could not have been offered. My friend and I accordingly studied a scene from "Venice Preserved," and delivered the same on the evening in ques-

tion to a very full attendance of enthusiastic shop-boys and melancholy milliners. To my very great delight, Mr. Thornton was so favourably impressed, that he courted the interview I was aiming to obtain : a very few words led the way to a communication of my wishes, and an agreeable proposition on his part, viz. that I should try my abilities on his boards the ensuing week :—the minor arrangements were speedily dispatched.

Some evening in May 1773, I accordingly made my public *début*, in the village of Chew Magna, and in the character of Jaffier. The Theatre was fitted up in the interior of a malt-house, and certainly on a much superior scale to Manager Jackson's. Here was a tolerable wardrobe, and one or two scenes, not so old as myself. My friends of the club supported my appearance with that frolic sort of enthusiasm which boys only feel ; and the receipts amounted to the unprecedented sum of nine pounds ! The exhilaration both of manager and company attested that the money had not come before it was wanted. The performance was

announced for repetition: I was immediately engaged to sustain the "juvenile tragedy" and "genteel comedy," and my name was inserted in the bills, with all due distinctness, as "Mr. Budd, a young gentleman only seventeen years of age,—his first appearance on any stage."

On the second night of my appearance, the manager followed me to my lodging, to present me with a share of the receipts, viz. eight shillings of the King's current coin, and three tallow-candles of Bristol manufacture. These shillings and candles being my first earnings in the profession, I determined to keep as sacred mementos; but a stern necessity soon compelled me to consume both.

The person under whose auspices I commenced my seven-and-forty years' acquaintance with the Drama, was destined, in a later day, to become one of the most notable eccentrics that ever clung round the skirts of Thalia and Melpomene. He was at this time a man of about five-and-twenty, very gentlemanly in his manners, and tolerably well-informed. He possessed some little property of his own, and



being fond of theatricals, purchased a wardrobe and some scenery, which enabled him to couple pleasure with profit, by organizing a "sharing scheme," over which he exercised an undivided control. Subsequently, he became dependent on the "profession;" and innumerable are the stories in circulation of his whim and ingenuity:—a habit of forgetfulness in his latter days, augmented his oddity. He was the person who originated the joke of a man going a journey, and putting on six shirts; so that when he wanted a clean one, he took one off. He had a favourite Scotch dress given to him by Lee Digges, which he was in the habit of wearing on all occasions, and once introduced in Stedfast in the "Heir at Law," compelling Henry Moreland to say that they had been wrecked on the coast of Scotland, instead of America, where his old friend lost his own, and was forced to assume the national habiliments.

His system of acting was not founded upon the principle of suiting the word to the action, but the action to the word. In Macheath, (which he invariably played for his benefit,) he

accordingly gave the lines—"Some men are killed by rope," (mimicking the Newgate ceremony,) "or gun," (levelling his aim like a musket,) "and others by the doctor's pill," (rolling the little ball in the palm of his hand, and pretending to swallow it.) The following will illustrate how skilfully he combined the duties of actor and manager. It was his general practice to take the money at the pit-door, another actor officiating at the boxes. One evening, when committing a dramatic homicide on Richard, the half-price was coming in. Never, in the sublimest of his histrionic illusions, was he altogether so enveloped in Shakspeare that he forgot himself; his vigilant right eye was cocked upon the pit entrance, to see that his substitute fulfilled his duty, or that the unprincipled bumpkins of the village did not confound their individuality, and pass in in a group. He had concluded the soliloquy in the tent-scene, and, rousing at the words of Catesby, had repeated the line—"Shadows, avaunt! you threaten here in vain!"—when he suddenly espied a malefactor stealing in unobserved; the interest of Ri-

chard's situation was instantly forgotten in his own :—substance as well as shadows departed ; and, with a distinguishing gesticulation, he exclaimed, “ That man in the grey coat came in without paying ! ” He then subjoined, with a burst of truly rational triumph, “ Richard's himself again ! ”

## CHAPTER III.

1773.—Commencement of my Peregrinations.—Kainsome.—Booth.—Glastonbury.—Tale of a Kite, the Glastonbury Apparition.—Castle Cary.—Mrs. Kirby.—“When shall I have rest?”—Westbury.—Mr. Butler and my Boots.—Musical Persecution.—“Chard.”—Reminiscence of Betty Atkins!—Beauty and Benevolence, an adventure.—The Parson-looking Gentleman.—Taunton.—Mrs. Skinne.—Female Amateur and Novelist.—Eccentricities of George Parker, the Lecturer.—The Five-and-Threepence.—Tale of a Trunk.—Weymouth.—Success.—My Mother.—Return Home.—A lucky Transposition.

AT Chew, when our short-lived season of four weeks concluded, my peregrinations commenced. Kainsome was the next town: scenery, wardrobe, and manager, to proceed thither by waggon; company, conformably to the model of our great archetype, Thespis, on foot. Before this, I had communicated with my mo-

Glastonbury to the house-tops, who, sympathizing with their friend, lifted up their tails and voices, and yelled together loud enough to have scared all the devils in Milton's Pandemonium. Next came out all the old women and young children, who, grouped at the corners of the street, silently contemplated, like so many statues, the inexplicable phenomenon above them. When we had amused ourselves in this way about two hours, the kite was taken in; and confiding it to the care of the captain's servant, we descended to the town to enjoy (though rather wickedly) the alarm we had given rise to. It would have filled a pretty thick volume (and not unamusingly) could I have penned down the explanations we received of the "apparition in the air," each of which varying with the grade and intellect of the object, was equally distant from a suspicion of the truth. The panic lasted throughout the night, and on the morrow communicated to the surrounding villages. People flocked in from all quarters, and the town was quite full. The captain's sagacious head had foreseen this result, and

perceived in it an opportunity of retrieving our affairs. He accordingly proposed to write a play on the subject, to be called "The Fiend in the Air, or the Glastonbury Apparition!" which we should get a house-painter in the town to illustrate with a view of the Torr-hill, &c. This was agreed to; and an imaginary likeness of the "fiend" was constructed by the company, to be worked by wires, composed of pasteboard and red flannel, with an illumed head, and a cracker at his tail. The piece was written—rehearsed and acted; each one had a part. Two gentlemen of the town gave imitations at the wings of the congregated cats; whilst the captain, positioned above, manœuvred and yelled for the fiend individually. This experiment succeeded so well with the country-people, who had not witnessed the phenomenon, but came to the theatre (as people always should) to be instructed, that we performed it four nights, and the receipts were sufficient to take us out of town with respectability. The memory of Shroud deserves therefore to be embalmed in the comedian's memorandums.

My situation in this company, however, had latterly become unpleasant, from the accession of a gentleman who "divided the business" with me, as it is termed; and being indignant that the Manager should stint me in the only thing he ever gave me—parts! I walked over to Castle Cary, where a Mr. Taylor was exhibiting the glories of Shakspeare to "fit audiences, though few," and ascertained that there was an opening for my services. I accordingly returned to take leave of Mr. Thornton and my companions; and beheld myself advertised with a kind of bull-frog importance, for the character of Hamlet.

Of Castle Cary, Manager Taylor, or his Company, I have retained no traces, either in my brain or my papers, worth transplanting to these pages; more than that, our principal actress, a Mrs. Kirby, playing "Lady Anne" one evening, and inquiring very piteously, "Oh, when shall I have rest?" a ruthless grocer started up in the pit and shouted out, "Not till you have paid me my one pound one and tenpence, Ma'am."

Westbury under the Plain was Mr. Taylor's next removal, another village, which you could

cover with a blanket, with the usual prospect of playing six weeks for my amusement, and taking a benefit at the end for the remuneration of my butcher and baker. This mode of living upon a six or eight weeks' credit, and receiving a surplus of coppers on a particular night, (sufficient to purchase the owner a pint of ale in the next town he came to,) seemed to me a curious peculiarity about the Country Comedian. Yet it was pretty generally the case in all sharing companies, from the inadequacy of the receipts to meet more than the "ordinary expenses," viz. Manager, (inclusive of scenery, dresses, &c.) room, lights, bills, fiddler, and scenc-shifter. The inconvenience of this system my mother's ten pounds had hitherto protected me from experiencing; but, owing to the trifling wants of one friend and another, *that* had fallen some time into a galloping consumption, and was now very near the hour of its departure. Still the prospect did not dishearten me; but at seventeen, with great animal spirits, and the abundant gratification of my passion, it would indeed have been a difficult matter for care or



privation to steal in and blight the young bud of enjoyment.

At Westbury we were joined by a Mr. Butler, an itinerant son of song, and one of "Apollo's apprentices," as George Stevens used to call the scientific operators of horse-hair on cat-gut. His advent was considered of peculiar importance, and we got up various musical performances (designated "Operas" by the Manager) on his account. He failed to attract however, and made a very mysterious exit the morning after his benefit.

This gentleman was located, not only in the same house with myself, but the same room, which being double-bedded, the landlord thought he would be meeting our mutual wishes by putting us together. Mr. Butler, however, had one peculiarity, which rendered his society any thing but pleasant—Nature had denied him a voice; but having advertised himself as a singer, he thought it was his duty to procure one by practising. To this end he devoted all the leisure of the day, and infringed upon the sacred silence of the night: a series of runs,

shakes, quavers, and ornamental undulations, would he embark in, as soon as he had slipped between the blankets, till, exhausted with his exertions, he sunk into the arms of Morpheus, like the swan, who is reported to die singing,—not that he bore any other resemblance either to the bird or her melody. I was very soon desirous, as my reader may suppose, that this gentleman might catch a severe cold, or burst a blood-vessel. I was punished, however, for my want of charity. On his benefit night, having to perform Lionel in Bickerstaff's Opera, he borrowed my best pair of boots, which fitted him so well, and looked so handsome in relief to his yellow pantaloons, that the ensuing morning, when he should have waited upon the Manager, to receive the amount of cash above the charges, he rose early, attired himself silently, and with his fiddle-case under his arm, and my boots on his legs, strode out of the village before any one was up, not even bidding the landlord good-b'ye, upon whose beef and beer he had been breeding his voice.

In a very short time the business of this

place assumed such a miserable aspect, that I determined to make a timely retreat before any serious difficulties accumulated. My mother's money was now gone, and I was entirely dependent on my profession. I accordingly wrote to my old Manager, Mr. Thornton, (who was now playing at Chard, in Somersetshire,) and informed him of my situation. He very kindly invited me to join him, and sent me the means of allaying my creditors' cravings. I spent the money to a shilling, and was obliged to leave my box behind me; thus illustrating the saying, "Three removes are as bad as a fire."

Mr. Thornton received me with open arms, and my situation in every public respect was rendered as comfortable as I could wish; I cannot say as much for my domestic condition. There was an unfortunate family likeness running through all these towns, and I was now destined to be acquainted with one of the peculiar virtues of an actor—abstinence! I occasionally went without a dinner, and devoted the gastronomic hour of two, to filling my head instead of my stomach: this occupation, however, was not

more novel than unpleasant ; and though I had too much pride to complain, I winced at swallowing even Shakspeare, instead of beef or mutton. Chard is thus signalized in my memory by the name of Betty Atkins,—a cook-maid at the inn where I resided, as benevolent as she was beautiful, who seeing what little nourishment I took in the day, provided me with a supper for nearly three weeks, without permitting me to discover whence it came from. Beautiful Betty ! kind as thou wert considerate ! who so practically proved the proverb, “ that a friend in need is a friend indeed : ” whilst the generality of life-writers and narrators find their only delight in dwelling on the high-born, the accomplished, and the clever, mine be the humbler but not less grateful duty to revive the memory of a generous domestic (aged about five-and-twenty, with glossy dark hair, hazel eyes, and a mouth that one loved to look at when she spoke), and your pardon, courteous reader, if, in penning this tribute to her virtues, the narrator momentarily forgets himself in the man !

Whilst at Chard, I frequently went over to

Taunton with one or two of my brethren, to visit the company which was playing there,—Charles and Snelling Powel were among its members; the former of whom was afterwards an actor of some repute at Covent Garden, the latter my much esteemed partner in the Boston theatre. During one of these rambles, I met with an adventure.

About half-way between the towns was an inn, where I purposed to stop and refresh myself. A short distance before I reached it, I passed a gentleman on foot, of a very comfortable and clerical appearance. He was dressed in black, with a broad-brimmed hat and a silver-headed cane. Having honoured my person with a particular scrutiny as he passed, he halted at a little distance to look back at me. This notice, and a tolerably empty stomach, induced me to indulge in various pleasing speculations as respected his character and motives. He is the parson of the parish, thought I, and, interested by my young and hungry appearance, he feels half-inclined to ask me to his house and satisfy my wants. Fancy needed but little sti-

mulus to carry me to the worthy man's table, and conjure up the apparatus of a gastronomic performance. The sudden disappearance of their object, however, dissipated my day-dream ; and pushing on to the inn, I entered the public room, and rang a hand-bell : my first summons was not attended to ; at my second, the door was slightly opened, and a red, round, full-moon sort of countenance intruded, with a mouth like a horizon, dividing the head into upper and lower hemisphere, and tresses sufficiently golden, to have procured the owner from a poet the name of " Apollo."

" Landlord," said I, " I have had a long walk, and want something to eat."

The sounds had scarcely passed my lips, before the rustic's jaws, opening like the gates of a subterranean abyss, sent forth a roar of laughter. Naturally surprised at such an answer, I requested an explanation ; but his wife coming up at that instant (a small, unsymmetrical bundle of fat), he repeated my words to her, and they instantly got up a duet to the same tune, laughed till they were tired of standing,

and then sat down to prolong their merriment. Mortified and indignant at what I could only interpret as a piece of bumpkin impertinence, I snatched up my hat, and was about to leave the house, when the landlord recovered his breath, and begged to explain himself.

It appeared that, about half an hour previously, a parson-looking gentleman, as he described him, (who corresponded with the person I had passed on the road,) had come into his parlour, and pretending that it was too early to dine, yet too long to wait for dinner, inquired what would be the charge for a slight snack of cold meat and bread. The honest farmer, wishing to be moderate as well as to cultivate his custom, replied, "Sixpence," and that he had got in the house a cold round of beef. "Very well," exclaimed the parson-looking gentleman, "bring it in, and with it a pint of your best ale."

The meat was brought, his customer sat down to it, and giving his knife a good edge, took the entire circuit of the beef, in a slice which must have weighed a pound. The farmer stared at this, in the conviction that he

should get but small profit from his sixpence. The gastronome was not long in putting this slice away, and its duplicate layer was taken from the round. The farmer was petrified. This was a shilling's worth of beef at the lowest reckoning. He contented himself, however, with the reflection, "that a bargain is a bargain," and perhaps the gentleman would be his customer another time. With the stillness and stiffness of a statue, he now regarded the clerical cormorant convey into his mouth, bit by bit, every vestige of the second pound. He now expected him to rise, when lo! the fatal weapon was again laid to the beef, and his unappeaseable customer exclaimed, "Landlord, now bring me the ale—I always drink when I have half done!" At these words, and their accompanying illustrative gesture, the farmer's delicacy was overwhelmed by his interest; he sprang towards the table, seized the dish, and reiterating the words, "haalf done, noa, dem it, Measter," said he, "if thee have any more of thic dish for thy little zixpence; do thee get along, or I'll zet Towzer at thee. I don't



want thy money; but only do thee moind, never to come here agin for a zixpenny znack !”

The gentleman in black, it appeared, very indignantly took up his hat and departed; and on my entering the room shortly after, and making a similar request, namely, that having come a long walk, I wanted something to eat, it was very pardonable that the good-humoured host should have indulged in his merriment. I could not now restrain my response to it, and we all laughed together. The landlord, having paid for his joke, was certainly entitled to laugh, and, in so doing, seemed to me to be a more eminent philosopher than your Senecas and Platos, who merely smiled at their misfortunes.

The hero of the above relation, the parson-looking gentleman, was none other, as I afterwards discovered, than the well-known and eccentric George Parker, the Lecturer; a man who, in every respect, was fitted to form a triumvirate with Stevens and Saville Carey; for, if he had not the public talents of the one, or the polished manner of the other, in the pure

element of humour he far surpassed them both. His dress was indeed the only grave habit he possessed, and his adoption of that was perhaps the strongest indication of his character—a love of contradictions and absurdity.

From Chard Mr. Thornton proceeded to Taunton, (notwithstanding a company had just quitted it,) and my benefit at the first was so successful, that I not only discharged all my own obligations, but assisted various of my companions. Such was the friendly treatment we had received from the inhabitants of this little town, (poverty only denying us their public support,) that we fully experienced the truth of the old song at parting,

“ ’Tis sorrow to go, but ’tis death to remain.”

Yet never, under all the inflictions of empty pockets and empty bellies, were a merrier, more care-despising group than that which, under the public domination of Manager Thornton, proceeded, on a certain morning in summer, like legitimate “peripatetics,” to the good town of Taunton. Never did a body of people exist in

better humour with the world or themselves; or who illustrated more happily the ingenious paradox, of the man who could "spend half-a-crown out of sixpence a-day." Here was true philosophy, after all,—resignation to fate, and a determination to make the most of a chequered existence.

The first circumstance that distinguished our career at Taunton was the advent of a female amateur, in the person of a Mrs. Skinne, the divorced wife of an eminent counsellor, and authoress of various novels, (the *Hermit*, the *Old Maid*, &c.) which in that day, though that's a good while ago, obtained a degree of popularity. She was an exceedingly beautiful woman, but as whimsical as George Parker himself. This accounted for her mode of travelling, her dramatic predilections, and the character she assumed, pretending to be "the wife of the Persian Ambassador!" The style in which she entered Taunton, and her Oriental distinction, created a sensation that was highly favourable to the theatre. She agreed to play *Violante*, in "*The Wonder*," (being advertised

as “ a Lady of high rank from Persia,) when lo ! a greater wonder ensued, — the house was crowded at first prices, and so many went away, that both company and public importuned her to repeat the performance ; she complied, and met with equal success (for she was an actress of no mean abilities) ; and when we had resolved to wait upon her in a body and tender her our thanks, it was discovered that some sudden resolution had seized her over-night, and she had precipitately left the town at daybreak, in a chaise. Whether this was from a refinement of feeling, that disliked the pleasure of being thanked, or from the fear that we were going to ask her to play again, I cannot say ; but the unaccountableness of her movements was in character with such an “ eccentric body.” We afterwards learnt, that she was going the circuit of England, on a kind of benevolent crusade against the wants of poor actors, playing for and patronizing them, in large towns and small, and penetrating every obscure village she passed, to discover whether it possessed any dramatic propensities.

At a dinner given at the principal inn in Taunton, I encountered George Parker, and perceived that my suspicions were well founded in regard to the consumer of the landlord's beef.

Parker had, in common with many others, besides Stevens and Carey, who considered acting their "profession," (and all other employments as mere modes of getting their bread,) the curious peculiarity of being clever at any thing but acting. I must say that he did as little honour to the sock as any man I ever saw; nor did he seem to be comfortable in any part but that of Father Paul, where his aldermanic rotundity complied so precisely with its physical requisitions. This was because he had not the spirit of imitation; his humour and manner were entirely his own; he could not copy, he originated; in fact, he was a great comedian in private life. This definition will not be unintelligible to those who have known any thing of theatricals.

We sat next each other at table, and, in the midst of one of his best stories, a gentleman whispered his friend, "George is a devilish

clever fellow, isn't he?" — "Yes." — "Pity he should ever want money. I lent him five-and-threepence yesterday." — "So did I," replied the other. — "You?" — "Yes!" They mentioned it to a third; he had been a donor to the same amount:—a fourth—a fifth—a sixth; they all acknowledged having lent him a "five-and-threepence." The smothered laughter which had circulated the table, now exploded in a simultaneous shout; and Parker was by no means disconcerted, for he whispered in my ear, the minute after, "How do you think I mean to pay 'em all?" — "I can't say." — "Present them with a box-ticket a-piece at my benefit!"

Now I am on the subject, I may as well relate the mode of his departure from Taunton.

Parker belonged to the company which had preceded us in the town; and never receiving any support from the public through the purse of his manager, had quartered himself upon them at large, till an opening presented itself in another community of Thespians, which promised more substantially the "three graces" of an actor—eating, drinking, and dressing. All this

time he had necessarily been deepening in the account of his landlady, whom he paid with the only coin an actor too frequently has at command—pretty words. Mrs. Brown, though embued with much of her sex's weakness at heart, had notwithstanding a very mathematical head, and a more cautious, calculating specimen of the landlady-race it had never been the fate of George Parker to encounter. Parker had a trunk containing the airy phantoms of a shirt and cravat, with a better suit of black, which he always put on on entering a town, (till the tradespeople had got accustomed to his shabby habits,) with other habilimentary etceteras; and this trunk Mrs. Brown very naturally detained as a hostage for his honour, till the bandage being removed from Fortune's eyes, that other lady would be enabled to look upon his merits. It was indispensable, however, that this trunk should accompany him, and that Mrs. Brown should possess no other pledge than his honour for the payment of her bill. He accordingly entered her little parlour one morning in a very

agitated manner, and pacing the floor with hasty steps, muttered in a low but distinct tone, "Shame, shame—ungrateful, deceitful woman!" Mrs. Brown was sitting down to her needle, but her ear was very quick, and she inquired what was the matter. "What's the matter?" he responded, with an exquisite assumption of mingled sadness and indignation—"you are the matter, Madam: I must say, and with the utmost charity, you are a very ill-used woman!"—Me, Mr. Parker! me?"—"Man can defend himself," he ejaculated; "but lovely—lovely—unprotected woman!"—"About me, Mr. Parker?" his landlady started on her legs, as though under the impulse of electricity—(it is necessary to mention here that Mrs. Brown a good deal resembled in her composition that of a salad, oil and vinegar, with mustard in abundance,)—"How is it?—what is it?—who is it that has said any thing, Mr. Parker?"

Parker perceived in ~~the~~ thermometer of her countenance that the quicksilver was rising to fever heat, and taking that as his cue, he replied,



—“ Mrs. Peters, Madam,—your friend, as she calls herself—Mrs. Peters is a very double-faced woman—a very scandalous woman—Mrs. Peters!—Hav’n’t I seen her,” he continued, with a tone and attitude à la Sterne, “ drinking your bohea tea, and swallowing your well-buttered toast! and now to report such things behind your back!”

Mrs. Brown’s agitation had worked up to an overflow. “ Mr. Parker—my dear Mr. Parker, for the love of heaven, tell me, or I shall go into fits! I have been that woman’s best friend—her only friend!”—“ Here’s ingratitude!” he exclaimed, keeping her off as long as possible from the point. “ Well, if there’s any one crime in the world greater than another, it is ingratitude.”—“ For God’s sake, Mr. Parker!”—“ Well then, Mrs. Brown, as I was coming through the market, I passed Mrs. Peters’ stall, and found her surrounded by a dozen of the most scandalous old women in Taunton, holding forth very shamefully to your disadvantage.”—“ But what did she say, Mr. Parker?”—“ Why, I’m half ashamed to tell you, Madam;

but since it is proper you should know, she averred most distinctly, in my presence, that she knew you to be a female monster!"—"A what!"—"A female monster—she said you were born with but one breast!"

At this charge, Mrs. Brown stared in Parker's face like a petrification, and he in hers with a kind of wondering sympathy. Regaining her breath—"One—one breast!" she exclaimed: "Oh the wretch! Where's my bonnet?—I'll let her know! One breast!—Look, Mr. Parker," and, carried away by the torrent of her fury, she snatched aside her handkerchief, and unboomed before him.—"A wretch indeed!" responded Parker, gazing very composedly upon this extraordinary exhibition—"she deserves to be put in the pillory."—"Put in the pillory!—I'll put her into the puddle!"—and grasping her bonnet, away she darted into the street, flew over to the market-place, and without giving Mrs. Peters any intimation of her design, seized a corner of her table—(a large board upon tressels,)—turned it aslant, and away went the whole magazine of

niceties into the gutter—oranges, apples, and sugar plums—a lamentable commingling of dirt and dainties. Before Mrs. Peters had recovered from the paralysis of this event, as a hungry lioness would have made up to an innocent lamb, did Mrs. Brown dart upon her unoffending victim, tear off her cap, and disfigure her countenance, till it was out of the power of her nearest relation to swear to her. Mrs. Peters however, being an able-bodied woman, and not lacking spirit, at length turned on her assailant, and, inflamed by the ruin that lay around her, dealt out a terrible reprisal. The market was now in an uproar: people flocked to the spot, constables were called in, and business was at a stand-still: it is hardly necessary to add, that the whole accusation was unfounded, or that Mr. Parker had a countryman in waiting near the door, who took Mrs. Brown's sallying out as the signal for his sallying in—when the long watched and much valued object of this stratagem was seized and shouldered, and, in five minutes after, pushed into the tail of a fly-waggon about to leave the town.

Sixteen weeks did we continue in Taunton, during which my income amounted to about two shillings and sixpence per se'nnight. The season having at length died of a lingering decline, it left me in a situation that was open but to one mode of relief—an application to my mother. She was now aware of my pursuits, and though rigidly opposed to them, she could not close her ears to the appeal of my necessities. The consequence was, that in reply to a letter full of the usual lamentations and protestations, my mother enclosed me another ten pounds, on the understanding that I was to return home immediately. This supply was another diving-bell to my sunken reputation, it brought it again up to the surface of public opinion. Four months of semi-starvation had taught me a very practical lesson. My duty now appeared to me the best policy; and I was making my mind up to comply with my mother's wish, in gratitude for her compliance with mine, when Satan again tempted me, in the person of a Mr. Hill, a singer, who called to see me on his way to Weymouth, and who pro-

posed, if I would accompany him, to use his influence in procuring me an admission to the "Corps Dramatique," which he knew was there, and in want of my services. The words were no sooner spoken, than the frenzy had again seized me. I grasped his hand, and agreed. We made arrangements for our trunks to proceed by waggon, and set off to walk the eight-and-forty miles,—I with but eighteen-pence remaining of my ten pounds, and he with no more of dirty coppers than, collectively estimated, amounted to half-a-crown. We had young legs however, and though light pockets, light hearts, and lighter bundles.

At Farmer Hudson's (George Parker's victim) we stopped to breakfast, who set before us a sufficiency of substantials, to supersede the necessity of another meal till bed-time (the farmer standing by, and contenting himself with his moderate charge in the enjoyment of his joke); "yeat what ye like, zur, only be kind enoof to let I know when ye ha' half done!" And at Dorchester, Hill had an acquaintance, who very kindly provided us with beds and

refreshment. The next morning we reached Weymouth, and Mr. Williams the manager, to my unspeakable delight, was willing to receive me. I was accordingly announced for Dick in "The Miller of Mansfield," and my success obtained me an engagement at one guinea per week. I now thought that the important corner was turned, and that fame, fortune, and luxury, were about to flow in on me, when a note from a magistrate was laid the next morning on my table, which dissipated my illusions, like the snapping of a scene-cord in the midst of a pantomime:—it informed me that my mother was in Weymouth, and had seen me at the theatre the previous evening—that she had applied to the Worshipful gentleman for his interference—and that if I did not choose, like a dutiful and repentant son, to go home with her, I could not be permitted to continue in Weymouth in my present capacity. A very short reflection convinced me of the necessity of my compliance: my manager's interest, and my mother's happiness, it involved:—there was no alternative. I walked to the inn where my

parent was staying—saw her—embraced her—blubbered—begged her pardon—promised to be a good boy in future, and swore I would never do so again. I then returned, took leave of manager, company, my bewitching mistress—the Stage, and jumping into a chaise, travelled back to Portsmouth and my employer.

My friend Hill was very sorry to lose me; and as I regard his memory, I wish to give him a chance of immortality, by affording him admission to these pages. Hill was no comedian; but, from the thin state of the Company on our opening night, was obliged to double Frederick and Don Pedro in “The Wonder.” His acting was very dull, till he came to the line, “Fie, Don Felix! draw your naked sword upon a lady?” when by an unlucky, or rather a lucky transposition, he said, “Fie, Don Felix! draw a naked lady on your sword!” This blunder immediately put the audience in good humour, and contributed more to the end he had in view, than all his sensible attempts for the night.

## CHAPTER IV.

1774.—Amateur-play at Poole.—Another aberration.—The value of threepence.—Walk to Shaftesbury.—The old system, “flat, stale, and unprofitable.”—Mrs. Skinne’s tactics.—Return to Portsmouth.—Ultimate consent of my friends, and formal adoption of the Stage as my profession.—London.—Macklin in *Shylock*.—Quin’s criticism.—Visit to Brentwood.—Zenith and nadir of theatricals.—Manager Penchard and his wig.—Lesson on economy.—Performance of “*The Recruiting Officer*.”—“Double, double toil and trouble.”—Mrs. Penchard, “the breeches figure.”—Manager Thornton and Holcroft.—Mr. Penchard’s procession.—Davy Osborn and his wife.—Mr. Weeks and his “woe.”—Miss Macklin and her father.—Stow Market.—Silent audience.—The Old Maid’s criticism.—Dedham, a change.—An old gentleman’s criticism.—Termination to strolling.

I HAD been home but three weeks, completely reconciled to my old employer and employments, when my schoolfellow, Mr. Hare, (who was designed for the Church, but entertained similar views with myself,) called on my mother,



ostensibly to congratulate her on my return, but really to request her permission for me to join a party of ladies and gentlemen, who were going to get up an amateur play at Poole, in aid of a charitable institution. To me, this communication was like a blacksmith applying his bellows to a smothered coal ;—the flame was subdued, but not extinct, and easily invigorated. To my mother it had a startling and disagreeable effect ; she began to hate the theatre on my account, with all the fervour of a purblind puritan ; but on mentioning the word charity, (be it spoken to her praise !) she relaxed : charity covereth a multitude of sins ; and, in her estimation, it was sufficiently extensive to cover that of acting. She accordingly gave her consent, (on condition that I returned within a week,) and obtaining that of my employer, a truly good-natured man, equipped me with a watch and five guineas for the trip.

Arrived at Poole, I was introduced to my confederates : the play of “The Jealous Wife” was rehearsed, and I was allotted Major Oakly : the sum of thirty-five pounds was collected from

our efforts, and a second performance was proposed, the profits of which were to be appropriated to a ball and dinner:—a principal lady seceding, I was obliged to double Lady Free-love, with the Major, in the second night, which I did without detaining the audience, as an actor in petticoats had done before me, “by not being shaved!”

When these amusements were over, the week and my five guineas were at an end, and honour and necessity alike began to confer with my conscience upon the point of my returning home; but my success on the above occasion had unexpectedly overthrown all my dutiful resolutions,—the madness had again seized me,—and hearing that my old manager, Mr. Taylor, was playing at Shaftesbury, I actually determined to join him, in defiance alike of the privations I should encounter, without a shilling in my pocket, and the obligations which bound me to keep my word to my parent. The necessity for my withholding my intention from my friend (who my mother considered a guarantee for my return), prevented my obtaining any assistance;

and though, on discharging my bill at the inn, I found that all the coppers I could command in the world did not amount to above six, I nevertheless persisted in proceeding to Shaftesbury, a distance of thirty-six miles.

Entrusting my trunk to a waggon, I rose early, eat my breakfast, tied all my clean linen in a bundle, scribbled a note to Hare, containing an apology to my mother, and took my path across the fields to the high road, in order that my companions might not witness my mode of quitting a town in which I had maintained such a dashing appearance.

When I had proceeded but a few miles, I remember, hearing a coach coming up, and fearing it might contain some of the amateurs, I jumped over a hedge to conceal myself, and, in so doing, alighted in a ditch, and sank up to my knees. On extricating my legs, I left behind me a shoe, and was compelled to take off my coat, roll up my shirt sleeve, and thrust my arm down the deep aperture to recover it: meanwhile, it was necessary that I should support myself by planting one foot against the hedge, and grasping the

roots of a holly-bush, when my hold giving way at the most critical moment, I was precipitated headlong into the mire. The consequence was, that I had to delay my journey nearly two hours on the sunny side of a hay-rick, to put my apparel in order.

On arriving at Blandford, (about half-way) fear and fatigue had combined to exhaust me, and I considered in what way I could most efficiently lay out my solitary threepence. I determined on a glass of brandy, and entering an inn, called for the first that ever passed my lips. When I had thrown down my coppers, and was about to depart, the landlady informed me that two of them were bad. A feather might have felled me at the sound: I had neither sense nor motion—the brandy positively congealed within me: the landlady looked in my face, and perceiving my agitation, surmised, I suspect, the cause, for she very goodnaturedly told me not to mind it, but if ever I came that way again, to remember her. About twenty years after, I did so. On a summer excursion with Incledon, we put up at the identical house.

I told him the circumstance, and he very generously assisted me to run up our bill in five days to about twenty pounds.

On the strength of this supply I proceeded, and, notwithstanding a shower of rain brimmed the measure of my difficulties, accomplished the thirty-six miles by eight o'clock. I immediately proceeded to the theatre, and encountering Mr. Taylor, was welcomed very kindly upon the terms of our previous engagement. On the stage I perceived my old friend Charles Powel, and the eccentric Mrs. Skinne, the amateur: the former took me home to his lodgings for the night, and on the morrow I was comfortably established in rooms of my own. Thus was I once more embarked in the life I had so seriously renounced.

The "business" at this town was on a par with that of Taunton—"stale, flat, and unprofitable." Treading the boards to the usual empty benches, and measuring the pavement with the usual empty pockets—the old system of marking out the attorney who made good punch,—chumming with the miller who gave good dinners—

(i. e. substantial ones,) and quartering at home upon some avaricious grocer, who dispensed to our necessities sandy sugar, sloe-leaf tea, bone-flour bread, and rusty bacon. As our stay was not long, my benefit extricated me from the involvements that ensued, and I very prudently expended my last shilling in paying for a ride back to Portsmouth. I may as well relate with my own the mode of Mrs. Skinne's departure from the town, who had now become dependent on the profession, and was reduced to many of its manœuvres.

The landlord of her house was a tyrannical West-country butcher, who, on account of some arrear in rent, took occasion to be very impudent one day; and Mrs. S——, finding that neither threats nor entreaties could induce him to quit her room, very quietly went to a drawer and took out a stage-pistol, which she presented at his head, in the manner of Estifania (a key would have had the same effect); the cowardly ruffian staggered back to the door, and his heel catching in its ledge, he made a sort of somerset backwards, and descended to the bottom of the

stairs, in the full conviction he had an ounce of lead in his brains. When he regained his legs and senses, he hurried away to a magistrate, and obtained a warrant and a constable to take the lady into custody. On returning, he found the door barricaded and the windows closed, with every symptom of determined resistance. As he did not like to injure his own property by taking the citadel by storm, he coolly sat down before it with the design of starving the garrison into submission. This plan, no doubt, would have succeeded with half the women in Shaftesbury, but Mrs. Skinne was too able a general to be defeated by such common-place means. All day she was heard pacing her room up and down, disdaining to make any reply to her beleaguerer's demands, yet expected every moment to unbar the door and admit him. With the first shade of evening, a chaise-and-four drove up to the house; and whilst four gentlemen ran up-stairs and secured hogs-flesh and his companion, two others rescued the lady from her confinement, and triumphantly carried her off in full gallop through Shaftesbury. The

butcher's bill was subsequently paid by her husband, and her luggage released. The last I heard of this extraordinary woman was, that she died at Margate in the humble capacity of a schoolmistress.

In returning to Portsmouth, I entertained various conjectures as to the reception I should meet with ; but I went home with the resolution of candidly asking my mother's consent to make the Stage my profession, having given sufficient proofs that it was a waste of time and money to continue me in any other. Very agreeably was I deceived to find (after the first gust of maternal tenderness had blown over) that her mind was half made up to meet my wishes (my employer having torn up my articles), and that she only awaited my father's return (then daily expected) to decide her. At Portsmouth I also encountered my friend Hare, who, after rating me for my want of confidence in the manner I quitted him, informed me that he had made up his mind to go on the stage, and if I obtained my friends' consent, we would meet in London, and commence our dramatic career



together. In a few days my father came into port, and having listened to the sad story of my repeated dereliction from duty, rapped out an extraordinary oath at my "infatuation," and sealed the whole affair in a trice, to my perfect satisfaction.

It was thus, gentle reader, at the age of eighteen, that the comedian, eschewing the pains-taking, peace-loving track of his forefathers, betook himself to the wild and diversified paths of the Drama. Thousands having done so before him, he is not required to offer any particular justification of his conduct; and the only question which can interest the public must be, whether, in his selected or rejected pursuits, he was able to pass his days most agreeably to himself, and render their recollection most amusing to those who came after him. The contents of these pages is the argument he must offer for the wisdom of his choice.

To proceed:—Having taken a formal farewell of business and duty, and a tender one of my parents and friends, my mother equipped me with a wardrobe, both abundant and elegant,

and twenty pounds in money, as a capital to begin with. My luggage was then consigned to a carrier, and my person to a London coach. I reached the capital in safety, and soon found myself installed in very comfortable lodgings in Tavistock Street, Covent Garden, being adjacent to the Rainbow Coffee-house, which was the appointed rendezvous with my companion. In a day or two, I received a letter from him, stating his intention to join me in a week, and I filled up the interim very pleasantly in going to the theatres, then presenting the greatest galaxy of talent our metropolitan boards ever sustained. "Garrick, Macklin, Smith, Powel, Reddish, Palmer, Clarke, Jefferson, King, Yates, Dodd, Parsons, Shuter, Woodward, Weston, Foote, Mrs. Abington, Miss Pope, Miss Young, Mrs. Yates," &c.

The performance that I was most impressed with was Macklin's Shylock. I consider it to have been a *chef-d'œuvre*, that must be classed with the Lear of Garrick, the Falstaff of Henderson, the Sir Pertinax of Cooke, and the Coriolanus of John Kemble. I have seen many

actors (and one in modern times) who surpassed him in passages, but none that sustained the character throughout, and presented on the whole such a bold and original portrait of the Jew. His success, however, is generally referred to his having been the original on its revival;—this is partly true: but in any age he must have produced the same effect; for he possessed by nature certain physical advantages, which qualified him to embody Shylock, and which, combined with his peculiar genius, constituted a performance which was never imitated in his own day, and cannot be described in this. If the truth could be ascertained, I believe that the key to the success of all actors in particular characters, would be found to consist in certain complexional resemblances between the two, independent of all genius, which enabled a more ready and perfect identity to take place; not that the man who plays a villain well must be a villain, or a hero a hero, but each must possess some natural adaption to assume the one with more ease and felicity than the other. Cook and Kemble are cases in point :

equally excellent in their peculiar spheres, they could not pass into each other's characters without mutual disadvantage.

Macklin's genius in bringing Shakspeare to light, and stamping that with a high tragic import, which in the hands of Tony Leigh and Underhill had been made the vehicle for the most disgraceful buffoonery, must nevertheless stand on record among the most brilliant anecdotes of our Drama ; and the two lines of Pope are sufficient to link the actor on to the skirts of the poet's immortality. Quin's criticism on the lines alluded to has always amused me very much, since, though not very delicate, it is so highly illustrative of the man's character. Macklin and he were never very friendly ; they were cast too much in the same mould, equally rough and masculine in frame, and in intellect they were alike opinionated and sarcastical ; whilst their difference consisted in habits and desires which led them to entertain a contempt for each other. Quin loved good living, and to rub shoulders with the aristocracy. Macklin's attachment was literature, and the flattery of persons

who were beneath him. When the celebrated lines therefore were repeated to the former—

“ This is the Jew  
That Shakspeare drew,”

Quin curled up his lip, and responded—

“ Spew, reader, spew !”

On the 21st of the month, instead of seeing my friend, I received a letter from him saying that he was prevented joining me for another week ; and the same evening, sitting in the pit of Drury Lane to see “ Rule a Wife and have a Wife,” I encountered my old Taunton associate, John Scott, who informed me that he was going down to Brentwood in Essex the next day, to play Serjeant Kite, and if I would accompany him, he would introduce me to the manager, who was a great character. I consented ; and on the following morning, after breakfasting together, we mounted the Norwich coach, which passed through the village.

The great pleasure I experienced from this visit arose from the contrast it afforded me—twenty-four hours and a stage-coach having carried me from the zenith to the very nadir of

theatricals. The evening before, I had sat in Drury Lane and seen Garrick. I was now introduced to a room fitted up in an inn, and Manager Penchard. Of the latter I shall speak presently, and of the theatre briefly remark, that it was characterised by a simplicity which rivalled Manager Jackson's; illustrious in the Comedian's memorandums as the arena of his virgin essay. Here was the old system of paper wings, hoop chandelier, superannuated scenery—fiddler, property-man, and lamplighter identical, with a company five in number, the first and worst of whom was the manager himself.

Mr. Penchard had been a manager fifty years, and, for that reason, continued to play all the juvenile characters. He was very tall, but stooped through infirmity. The gout was in both his legs, Shakspeare in his head, and money in his heart. He was a determined miser, and an actor by confederacy, that is, with the assistance of a remarkable peruke, which had been worn, as he averred, by Colley Cibber in the "Fops." It was such a wig as would now grace the head of a Lord Chief Justice; and in

this, I was informed, he played the whole round of his characters,—Hamlet, Don Felix, Lord Townley, and Zanga ; so that he had obtained the familiar title throughout England of “Penchard and his Wig.” On our way to his lodgings we were met by a member of the Company, who knew Scott, and begged to join us, as he had a favour to ask of his superior, which might not otherwise be granted.

On reaching the house, we were shown upstairs into a dark, dingy, narrow, little room, with a bed in one corner and an immense chest in the other. We found the manager seated in an elbow-chair, muffled in a morning-gown, which looked like an adaptation of a Venetian tunic, by the side of a three-legged table at which he was eating his breakfast. This meal consisted of a halfpenny roll and a halfpenny-worth of milk. He resembled a conjunction of Shakspeare’s seventh age, “the lean and slippered pantaloon,” and the apothecary in “Romeo and Juliet,” “so meagre and very pallid were his looks.” At our entrance, the becoming dignity of the manager in the man was very

perceptible. He slightly inclined his head, with a "Good morning, Gentlemen," and continued his meal, leaving us upon our legs—but I forget, there were no more chairs in the room. Mr. Scott then introduced me to him; and the manager commenced a conversation by giving me some valuable advice as to the life I was about to embrace. In the intervals of his catarrh and lumbago, he at length grew facetious; and the person who accompanied us, thinking this to be a good opportunity, stepped up to his table, and said, with some hesitation, he had a trifling favour to ask. The manager's face elongated in an instant, and every wrinkle disappeared like a sudden calm at sea—a very great change, for his visage had so many furrows when he smiled, that it bore no small resemblance to some part of the map of Europe.—"A favour, Mr. Singer," he mumbled; "a trifling favour, eh! You are always asking trifling favours, Sir, and such as are enough to ruin me. What is it you want this time?"—"The loan of a shilling, if it's not inconvenient."—"A what?"—"A shilling, Sir!"—"What



can you do with your money ?"—Then taking another mouthful of his cup, he hesitated a moment ; but perceiving we were all looking at him stedfastly, he at length reluctantly drew a leathern pouch from his side, and untying its orifice, selected a shilling from the silver it contained, which holding an instant between his finger and thumb, he remarked, with some asperity—"You will remember, Mr. Singer, it was but last Saturday you shared three-and-sixpence, and this is Wednesday !"

After Mr. Singer had made a proper acknowledgment and retired, the old gentleman detailed to us his system of living, as a comment upon what he termed the ruinous extravagance of the age. Threepence a-day, we were informed, supplied him with subsistence. In the morning, his roll and milk, as we observed ; at dinner, a rasher of bacon and an egg ; his tea, an *encore* to his breakfast ; all of which was attainable for the above small sum. This was the severest lesson upon economy I ever received. But with penuriousness so palpable, I could not help thinking there was a considerable

mixture of eccentricity ; for he was known to have accumulated by his labours above a thousand pounds.—“ Ah, Gentlemen,” he continued, “ times are strangely altered since I was a young man ; then, indeed, any man of talent and temperance could live by the profession, and lay by ; now, that is impossible, such are the extravagant habits people run into. There is my wife and daughter as bad as any of them, always wanting to waste time and money, if permitted ; always dunning me for a shilling—a shilling : but I allow them two shillings and sixpence a-week a-piece, and make them keep separate establishments !”

In the evening, I seated myself on a front bench in the pit, to witness the performance. The play was “ The Recruiting Officer ;” and the young and gallant Plume was supported by the manager. When the curtain drew up, he was discovered in his elbow-chair ; one leg, swathed in flannel, resting on a stool. He was dressed in a Queen Anne suit of regimentals, crowned with his inseparable companion—the wig ! which was surmounted by a peculiarly

commanding cocked-hat, such as may sometimes be seen in the sign-board representation of the Marquess of Granby. His performance of Plume was precisely that of Lord Ogleby ; and all the business of the character consisted in his taking snuff, and producing and putting away a dirty pocket-handkerchief. As he could neither exit nor enter, when his scene was over, the curtain was lowered, and he was wheeled off till the next occurred. With the exception of my friend Scott in Kite, and Miss Penchard in Rose, the rest of the acting preserved a beautiful correspondence to the manager's. The company being as destitute of numbers as talent, Mrs. Penchard doubled Silvia and Captain Brazen ; and Mr. Singer, Mr. Worthy, Costar Pearman, and Justice Balance, &c. This was illustrating the mystic words of the Weird Sisters very felicitously, "double, double toil—and trouble."

Mrs. Penchard, the wife, from a certain slenderness of figure and volatility of spirit, (though turned sixty,) had retained many characters in genteel comedy, which were too bustling for

her husband to perform, and thus became what was styled the "Breeches figure" of the company. The "gallant gay Lothario" had but lately and reluctantly been given up to her by her husband; and during its performance one evening, when falling in the combat, part of her dress became discomposed, at which the gallery portion of the audience set up a loud clapping and shouting: this the old lady unfortunately mistook for approbation; and when her daughter, at the wing, repeatedly requested her to come off, "I won't—I won't," she replied, loud enough to be heard by the spectators. "Crack your jealous heart, you don't want any one to get applause but yourself!"

Promising my friend Scott to come down the ensuing week and play for his benefit, I returned to town to await the arrival of my Pylades, Mr. Hare: he failed, however, to make his appearance, and I proceeded to Brentwood to make mine. There I encountered my old Manager, Mr. Thornton, (who was also to assist in the entertainment) dressed in the very height of buckism—a scarlet coat, laced hat, embroi-

dered waistcoat, buckskin breeches, and top-boots ! He was a great contrast to his brother Manager, Mr. Penchard, and must have been one of the persons whom the latter considered a disgrace to the profession. The next morning, I met him as he was going to the Post-office, and he informed me that " he was about to embark in a speculation in Essex, and had advertised for people ;" that " he had room for my services, and should be happy to receive me." I frankly told him of the engagement that subsisted between me and my friend, which fettered my wishes till he arrived.

Amongst other communications at the Post-office, he received one from Holcroft, the author, who applied for an engagement, embracing every good part in the cast-book, from Alexander the Great down to Scrub. Strange as it may appear, this letter was so deficient in orthography and etymology, that the manager sent back the brief reply, that " he would treat with no person to become a member of his Company who could neither read nor write !"

As Mr. Holcroft has left behind him works

which attest his powers not only as a man of genius, but a critic, it is by no means an absurd conjecture to attribute to the very letter in question some portion of the stimulus which was necessary to have drawn those powers forth. Scorn or ridicule has, in more than one instance, driven a man of proud spirit into the discovery of a hidden talent, when seeking either for the means of retaliation, or to obtain an armour against its shafts.

On our return, we encountered Manager Penchard and his company going out of town. This was a picture !

First came Mr. Singer and Mrs. Penchard, arm-in-arm ; then old Joe, the stage-keeper, leading a Neddy, (the property and old companion of Mr. Penchard in his wanderings,) which supported two panniers containing the scenery and wardrobe ; and above them, with a leg resting on each, Mr. Penchard himself, dressed in his " Ranger " suit of " brown and gold," with his distinguishing wig, and a little three-cornered hat cocked on one side, giving the septuagenarian an air of gaiety that well

accorded with his known attachment for the rakes and lovers of the Drama: one hand was knuckled in his side, (his favourite position,) and the other raised a pinch of snuff to his nose; and as he passed along he nodded and bowed to all about him, and seemed greatly pleased with the attention he excited. His daughter and two other persons brought up the rear.

On my return to London, I found a letter from my friend, acquainting me that circumstances had occurred, which, for the present, would frustrate our intention of joining: he advised me, therefore, to delay no longer on his account, but accept what offers were open to me; and simply leave at the "Rainbow" a clue to where he might find me when he came to town. Being thus set at liberty, though with some regret, I bent my steps to the "Black Lion," a theatrical house of call in Bow Street, (which has long since disappeared,) and there met a dapper little fellow, of the name of Osborn, (familiarily called "little Davy," of which appellation he was not a little proud, it being the subwomen of Garrick,) who was about to com-

mence management at Braintree, a village at no great distance from Brentwood. The terms he offered me to accompany him were so favourable, that I did not hesitate to accept them, though I must confess that my experience had sufficiently sickened me with "strolling;" and the system I had witnessed in London had filled my heart with an ambition for something more reputable and less precarious. It must be remembered, however, that I was still a mere boy, and totally unknown either in or out of my profession; an introduction to the managers of Dublin, Bath, or York, was as far off as their theatres; and so much of my twenty pounds had run away, that an immediate exertion was necessary. As the result of my reflections, I found myself, in two days afterwards, in the village of Braintree, installed in the Cæsarship of Mr. Osborn's corps, which, upon the whole, was somewhat superior to that of Mr. Thornton.

My manager was an oddity himself; but he was rendered more remarkable in the possession of a lively little wife, pretty, ignorant, and ill-tempered, who, with himself, held out a very



singular specimen of connubial felicity. Each morning of their lives was sure to commence with a storm, which in the fervour of noon became gradually dissipated, and under the mild influence of evening was altogether forgotten. As our numbers were few, and our business very good, I advised Mr. Osborn to engage my friend Scott, who was delivering an entertainment at a neighbouring village. He accordingly hired a chaise, and with his wife and myself drove over to see him. Entering the hamlet, we met our object, employing himself in the responsible office of delivering the bills, arrayed in a suit of "blue and gold," with a gold-laced hat and a gold-headed cane; in fact, he had gold in every part of him, except his pocket. He gladly accepted our invitation; and on our way home, the manager and his wife beginning to discuss the propriety of this arrangement, an argument arose, which proved a prolific parent of epithets, which again were speedily converted into something like a clawing on the one hand, and a cuffing of ears on the other. I having vainly endeavoured to allay the dissension, found

my situation vastly unpleasant : at length, as we were about to enter Braintree, "little Davy" gave me a wink to jump out, and the minute after turned his insurgent spouse into the bosom of a capacious ditch, drenching the little pepper-castor of a woman into immediate obedience. I made it my business to extricate her, whilst he righted the vehicle. After a little arrangement of her clothes, they got in again, and went forward, I following (by preference) on foot. They lodged in the same house with myself; and, as I retired to rest, I perceived that he had been shocked by another matrimonial tornado, as I could overhear him rehearsing the part of Jobson with his Nell, in the strapping-scene. I went to bed reflecting seriously on the lottery of wedlock; but in the morning the storm had blown over, and they were as happy and fond as two turtle-doves on St. Valentine's Day. He had been out with her to purchase some new apparel, and she was lavishing on him her magazine of sweetmeats; love, duck, and "dear Davy!" besides ogles, sighs, squeezes, and kisses, *ad infinitum*.

The same day I was given Romeo to study, to Mrs. Osborn's Juliet. This lady had that kind of originality in her style, which not merely disdained a resemblance to any other persons, but was altogether unlike any thing else in human nature. In the performance of the play, owing to the limited number of our corps, we were reduced to many shifts—the most humorous of which was Romeo's having to toll the bell, and Juliet the dead to sing her own dirge. To consummate the effects of the evening, an old gentleman in the company, by the name of Weeks, who played the Friar, (and whose body seemed to resemble a Norwegian deal, never fit for use till it had had a good soaking,) on arriving at the concluding speech, which as it contained a moral was never omitted in the country—

“From such sad feuds, what dire misfortunes flow,”

—espied a carpenter behind the scenes very cautiously, but decidedly, approaching a tankard of ale, with which he had been solacing himself during the evening, in order, as he used to say,

"to get mellow in the character." The tankard was placed in a convenient niche, with a good draught at its bottom; and whenever he was on, his eye would glance off, to watch over its safety. Being a little tipsied, he was somewhat stupified att he treachery of the varlet; and fixing his eyes, cat-a-mountain like, on him, momentarily forgot his audience in himself, who interpreting this as a piece of deep acting, began to applaud. The carpenter was now within a step of the tankard, and Weeks slowly articulated—

"Whate'er the cause—

(Here the fellow raised his hand)

"the sure effect is—

The knight of the hammer had clenched the pewter,—Weeks at the same instant staggered off, wrenching the jeopardized liquid from his grasp,—the friar tucked it under his arm, and popping his head on at the wing, with a significant nod, shouted the last word—"woe!"—at which the curtain fell, amidst a roar of laughter,—a termination very rarely contemplated to the "Tragedy of Tragedies."

At our next town, Stow Market, we were destined to encounter an audience so extremely taciturn, that we knew not whether to give them credit for wisdom or stupidity. At last we discovered the cause: so powerful was their illusion, so entire their absorption in the interest of the play, that they forgot the means by which they were excited, and forbore to express their feelings, from an idea of its impropriety: they absolutely conceived that any notice would have annoyed us. Never, in the subsequent course of my career, do I remember a parallel to this—it was the perfection of praise; and yet, such is the curious composition of actors, when the thing was explained to us, we did not feel properly grateful, but were more inclined to admire than like our treatment. But every one knows what applause is to an actor: it is what the medal is to an artist—an assurance that his efforts have been favourably received, therefore a constant encouragement to improve them. It may be called the sunshine of the Stage, as nothing will grow there without it. The truth is, that it

supplies that excitement to the actor, which is necessary to perfect his union with the character. It is therefore at all times to be desired, if never warrantably to be sought for; since, owing to the preponderance of pit and gallery over boxes, it must also be considered a questionable criterion of merit. However, our audience were at length aroused, and owing to the following circumstance:—

Mr. Scótt, my fellow-hero in the company, being a Mason, was in the habit of delivering an entertainment of “Readings and Recitations,” whenever he stumbled upon a village that contained a lodge. On the Monday we were to perform the “Bold Stroke for a Wife,” in which he did the Colonel. He had quitted us on Saturday, to take a survey of the country, with the promise of returning to rehearsal on the “play day.” He did not keep his word; but as we knew him to be “dead perfect,” (having played the piece before,) and he was proverbial for punctuality, this gave us no concern: his part was read. About three o’clock, however, a rough-headed, red-faced ragamuffin of a

plough-boy arrived with a note from an adjacent village, where it appeared the whole community had risen up to detain him among them that evening, for the gratification of attending his "Readings,"—such a particular case, he hoped, would plead his excuse, and he therefore sent us *timely* notice, in order that we might change the play. As we had no leisure at this period to discuss the question of Mr. Scott's generosity in this conduct, a general council of the company ensued, to act upon his advice, and decide what performance should be substituted. After canvassing the merits and peculiarities of twenty pieces, "The Orphan" appeared to be the least difficult, and we fixed upon it. Two other queries were now to be considered, whether, and how, we should acquaint the public with a change. Mr. Osborne remarked, that as we expected a full house to the Comedy,—(the title, as well as that of "A Bold Stroke for a Husband," being very attractive in small country towns, where there are a great many unmarried young people)—he feared that the announcement of a Tragedy would turn money

from the doors; and as that event was less desirable to the company than the public enlightenment, it was decided on *nem. con.* that "The Orphan" should be represented instead of the "Bold Stroke," but without any promulgation; thus leaving it to the critical acumen of our audience to distinguish between Thalia and Melpomene!

The night came—the house filled—the curtain went up—the play went on—moreover, it went down: not a whisper was breathed—not a fan agitated—not a hand struck its fellow: one would have thought not a heart beat—all was observation and quiescence as usual—"dead and deep,"—the spectators gazing upon us as though we were certain unearthly appearances, or more exactly like the people of a city in the "Arabian Nights," who were suddenly converted into stone: the same raising of the brow, dropping of the jaw, propping of the chin, and settling of the eye, continuing from the commencement to the close of the act. On this occasion, however, we were not inclined to murmur at their silence, fearing, on the contrary,



that the first exclamation would be to our detection, and, consequently, the rousing of the sleeping lion to our disgrace. But fate willed it otherwise. The play proceeded—the actors went on and off—and nothing occurred to disturb either the looks or positions of the audience, till in the midst of the fourth act, when I, (as Castalio,) addressing Monimia's maid, exclaimed in reply to her refusal to admit me—

“By heaven ! I'll scale the window, and get in by force,  
Let the glad consequence be what it may ;”

at which an old maiden lady, in a high-crowned critical cap, with spectacles on her nose, and her peaked chin propped on an ivory-headed cane (who had sat as mute and motionless all the evening as the rest) suddenly relaxed her fixidity, and exclaimed, giving three emphatic taps with her staff—“Bravo, young man—bravo—that's a ‘bold stroke for a wife,’ indeed !”—Whether it was the example of so respectable a person, or a general concurrence in the justice of her criticism, I know not—but the impulse was electrical—the train was

fired ; tongues, hands, and heels, were loosened to their welcome office, and a universal explosion of approbation took place. Castalio was at length obliged to rise from his supplications to Monimia, and return thanks to the public: thus eminently consoled in the extraordinary warmth of one mistress, for the extraordinary aversion of the other.

At Needham, our next remove, I became acquainted with Miss Macklin, the actress, who had retreated to this little haven from the troubled element of public life, to live upon the income she had accrued by her professional labours. She was an admirable reader, (with a true Shakspearian attachment,) and her voice and figure led me to perceive some of the grounds upon which she had founded her popularity: she was not at this time upon good terms with her father, which was owing to a domestic occurrence; but their original disagreement, as she informed me, grew out of a reading in Portia—she always said that “mercy was mightiest in the *mightiest*,” but he maintaining it “was mightiest *in* the mightiest,”

showed her no mercy, but instantly renounced her.

At Dedham, my strolling career came to a conclusion. During my performance of Belcour one evening, fate sent two gentlemen into the front, who were aldermen of the city of Norwich, and part-proprietors of the theatre—Messrs. Gay and Day—a pair of beings as harmonious in their dispositions as they were in their names, and as round in their dimensions as the strictest forms of their order could require. When my labours were ended, their servant came round to me with a note, requesting my company to sup at the inn. I attended their invitation, and was informed that they were pleased with my acting, and as some accessions were required to the Norwich company for its ensuing season at Ipswich, were willing to give me a note of recommendation to Mr. Griffiths, the manager, which they had no doubt would procure me an engagement. Half wild with this intelligence, I poured forth a profusion of acknowledgments, received their billet, and ran home to pen an appropriate epistle as its covering.

The result was, that in three days time I received an answer from Mr. Griffiths, containing an engagement to play the fops and light comedy, at a salary of thirty shillings a-week, in the theatre which ranked next to Bath, out of the metropolis.

If my reader cannot enter into my feelings at this sudden change and unexpected elevation, from the lowest to within one of the highest rounds in the dramatic ladder, it is useless for me to describe them. Dedham, which is thus signalized in my journal as the point where my rise in the profession commenced, is noted for nothing else save a criticism which an elderly gentleman in black one evening passed on our performance.

The stage-struck son of a neighbouring farmer, who had lately joined the company, and received for his services permission to put on stage clothes, was entrusted (through necessity) with the part of Catesby in "Jane Shore;" and at the scene where he suddenly appears to arrest the unfortunate woman and her friend, instead of saying, "Seize on them both as trai-

tors to the state !” he turned the last word into “ stage,” at which the solitary occupant of our boxes responded in a very audible tone, “ Bravo, that’s the best reading I have heard to-night !”

## CHAPTER V.

- 1774.—Norwich Green-room.—Mrs. Brown (prototype of Mrs. Jordan).—Mrs. Ibbot (celebrated by Churchill).—Stage pronunciation ninety years ago.—Mrs. Cooper.—Mr. Griffiths.—Brunton.—Bob Bowles !—Definition of “ Borachio.”—An Illustration of Shakspeare.—“ Bury St. Edmunds.”—Mrs. Baker’s Booth.—Lewey Owen.—The Clown.—Experiment upon a Silk Mercer.—Patience.—My first Wife !—Norwich fishing parties.—Eccentricities of Bob Bowles.—Credulity of Mr. Griffiths.—“ The Yarmouth herring.”—“ The wild duck.”—Remarks upon the essentials to form an Actor, and the “ Science of the Stage.”—Anecdotes of the Norwich people.—Misnomers.—Misapprehensions.—The Alderman’s toast.
- 1775.—London.—Strictures on the first performance of “ The Rivals.”—Cause of the first night’s failure.—The acting, &c.—Plymouth Dock.—The gallant “ Middy.”—Captain Crouch.—Stephen Kemble.—“ Curse my coat !—Think of my feelings !”

THE news of my engagement, it will be supposed, created some stir in the company ; it did also in the town. Messrs. Gay and Day, who

had come to Dedham on business, were driven away by the flood of applications. When I mentioned the matter to Mrs. Osborne, she sneeringly remarked, that "it was a pity some people did not know when they were well off!" On mentioning it to another (who had played Stockwell to my Belcour), he called the worthy Aldermen "worsted-headed weavers without any judgment!" but Scott and Osborne shook me warmly by the hand, and congratulated me on my good fortune.

I then bade a thankful farewell to strolling, to which, however, I must acknowledge myself indebted for two things that principally contributed to my subsequent prosperity:—an energy acquired in the daily practice of overcoming difficulties, and discretion in the control of money, from the privations I had been obliged to submit to. So completely, however, had my experience kept me in the dark in regard to the "Stage," or my own abilities, that, on entering a regular theatre, I found I was as ignorant of the mechanism of the one, as the extent of the other. Nevertheless, I possessed these advan-

tages to start with,—a good figure, a good study, and a good stock of confidence; and having collected most of the materials for success, from this hour, under an established system, began to put them together.

The “Norwich Green-room,” at this time, contained three or four individuals it may be worth while to notice.

Mrs. Ross (afterwards Mrs. Brown), a comedian whose merit will be sufficiently attested by the fact, that she was the acknowledged prototype of Mrs. Jordan; the latter lady having imbibed the idea, that she could play comedy from seeing the former perform a hoyden at York.

Pasquin, in his well-known work, “The Children of Thespis,” either alludes to this circumstance, or pays a proper tribute to her talents, and explains the cause of her metropolitan failure.

When she appeared at Covent Garden, (in Miss Prue, I believe,) the audience were delighted, but the critics in the pit exclaimed, “It’s a pity she imitates Mrs. Jordan!” which



reminds me of the story of a silk-mercier, who had associated with Shuter till he caught not only all his best jokes and ditties, but the very manner in which they were given. The latter, hearing this, determined to visit a club one evening, which this gentleman frequented, and see what would be the effect of his good things at first hand, which had told so well at second. He did so ; but soon lost both humour and temper, at hearing the worthy cits, whenever he attempted to be funny, respond with mingled wonder and delight, " How like Tom Bennet !"

Whatever may be the question as to the talent of Mrs. Brown, (the victim of a fate so peculiar,) one thing has on all hands been admitted, that she possessed feelings and principles which would have dignified her in the most exalted station. This is a tribute to departed worth, which it is the duty of every man to pay, and of the actor particularly, who would turn aside the shaft that is so often winged at the moral character of his profession.

About four years ago (1823), Mrs. Brown

was residing in the suburbs of London, and I paid her a visit. Having met in the morning of our days, it was mutually pleasant to shake hands as the shades of evening were falling around us, and cast a brief glance over the diversified track we had respectively passed since we parted.

Mrs. Ibbot, our tragedian, was a lady upon the verge of fifty, who some years before had accepted an engagement from Rich of Covent Garden, come up to town, made a successful *début*, and would no doubt have become a favourite, but experiencing a slight neglect from the manager (one of his usual eccentricities), took the coach back to Norwich the following morning, and there continued for the rest of her days. Churchill, in his *Rosciad*, speaks of her great effort, Queen Elizabeth in "The Earl of Essex," and eulogizes the intelligence she threw into the interrogation to Lady Russell (the confidant between her and the Earl, who, being in the interest of his enemies, withholds the means of his deliverance)——"No ring!"

This was a point which must have resembled

the heart-gushing shriek of that unequalled actress Mrs. Barry, in Lady Randolph,—“Does he live?” The way in which Mrs. Siddons gave those words, convinced me of the difference between simple art and simple nature.

Mrs. Ibbot used to relate to me many whimsical illustrations of dramatic life, and among others, once said, that about the period of her entering the profession (1740), she was present at the performance of an old Roman play, in a gentleman's barn in Norfolk, when the principal actor came forward to deliver the Prologue (which then in the country used generally to be an epitome of the plot), and having to say, “When Hannibal and Scipio first waged war, they took a circumference to Africa,” he enunciated—“When Han-ni-bawl and Ski-pi-o first wag-ged war, they took a kirk-kum-ference round to Afri-ca.”

Mrs. Cooper was a lady who claims a share of my reader's attention, it being her destiny to become the first Mrs. Bernard. To do her justice, she was one of the most versatile women out of London—a kind of Garrick in petticoats

—having played in the course of one season Lady Macbeth, Juliet, Violante, Nell, (in the “Devil to pay,”) Macheath and Mandane, and all with a degree of merit, which is not invariably witnessed in the metropolis.

Mr. Griffiths, our manager, was a perfect beau of the old school, a Sir Philip Modelove in real life; an elderly gentleman with youthful manners and propensities, tolerably educated, and tolerably clever in the business of the Stage; but a mere child in the knowledge of the world. His well-known integrity, however, had obtained him his present situation, and he had abundance of good humour to atone for his vanity.

Mr. Brunton (afterwards of Covent Garden) was our leading tragedian, and one of the best Shylocks, after the three best, (Macklin, Cooke, and Henderson,) I have ever seen; and a Mr. Bowles was our principal singer, who was about the most legitimate descendant of that worthy god, “Momus,” the eighteenth century produced. I will commence my illustrations of this important fact here.

Bowles was a great favourite with the manager; his jokes and whimsicalities were a sure antidote to the hyp, and a grateful relief to the mechanical duties of the Stage. Bowles, on the other hand, consulted his interest by being constantly with his superior. He not only secured his situation thereby, but a capital dinner three times a-week. In doing this, however, he could not blind his eyes to the perception of the manager's weak points, or divert the bent of his own disposition. On the contrary, he was continually "drawing him out," to the amusement of the company, by indulging in some practical satire, which, whenever discovered, (such was the influence he had obtained,) was attended with the sure result of the manager's forgiveness.

Bowles was very fond of fishing, and never wore gloves, which rendered his hands on a cold day very like two pieces of raw beef. Griffiths was extremely particular in this respect, and always quizzed Bowles upon their vulgar appearance. The manager, among other of his peculiarities, was in the habit of bringing a

volume of "Shakspeare" to rehearsal, (whenever one of his plays was performed,) very elegantly bound and embellished, and enriched with marginal notes from his own pen, but which were, more generally, directions as to the stage-business, and style of dressing and playing the characters, than critical annotations upon the text. These volumes Mr. Griffiths prized very highly, seldom spared from his library, and on the stage, never trusted out of his hand.

"Much ado about Nothing" being "called" one morning, the manager, as usual, brought his volume under his arm; but before the rehearsal concluded, a proprietor requiring his presence in the committee-room, (I should have related this at Norwich,) he laid it down on the prompter's table. Bowles had long watched this precious book, and immediately took it up. Reading in the margin, that "Benedict" (which Griffiths played) "should look at least five-and-thirty—should be manly, and even elegant, but not volatile or flippant;"—that "Claudio should be youthful and spirited, and wear a brown wig, if 'Pedro' wore a black one;"—

that “ ‘Dogberry’ should not be over-acted, nor played to the galleries ;” and that “ ‘Verges’ should be this and that ; and so-and-so, and so-and-so :”—Bowles exclaimed, “ Why, Mr. Griffiths has never noticed Borachio !” (Bowles’s part, and one of the worst in the piece !) Upon which, he took up a pen and scribbled, in a scraggy hand—“ Borachio should be a lean, long-backed fellow, with sandy hair, and red hands, fond of nothing but fishing !” (his exact counterpart.)

My reader must imagine the manner in which Mr. Griffiths read this note, and the expressions of those who listened to him.

Colchester was the next town in the circuit, to reach which the company chose their own modes of conveyance. I being very attached to the society of Mrs. Cooper, as also to that of Mrs. Ibbot, (who had kindly undertaken to read “Shakspeare” to me,) proposed to join them in a chaise, which was agreed to. Mrs. Cooper was my superior, alike in merit and in years, but was possessed of some personal beauty, and a certain fascination in manner, to

which my young heart (consider, nineteen, gentle reader) was not proof. Yet, as this is a subject (however interesting to myself) in which I cannot expect my reader to sympathize, I willingly pass it over, and with it the town above-mentioned ; the only thing of which I can remember being a circumstance that struck me at the time as somewhat remarkable, namely, that I could never get an oyster at Colchester without paying twice as much for it, as I did in London.

Bury St. Edmund's was our next destination ; and as we opened in the "fair week," Mr. Griffiths anticipated a harvest. We were destined, however, to encounter a formidable antagonist in "Mrs. Baker's booth," whose public bill of fare put forth a greater variety, and more piquant dishes, than ours, which advertised but the simple, though substantial, cookery of the Shakspearian roast-beef, the Otway mutton, and the Farquhar fowl. Mrs. Baker moreover had a host in the person of Lewey Owen, the clown, (the most noted out of London,) who performed a part on the platform of her theatre, to take people in, which we could



not presume to imitate. Mr. Griffiths used to get very philosophical upon this subject, (and our empty gallery was a nightly memento,) denominating Mrs. Baker a quack, and ourselves the legitimate moral practitioners, who adopted Aristotle's maxim, and "purged the (public) mind with pity and terror." "No wonder," he used to say, "that thefts and drunkenness, and distress, so abound, when people go to booths instead of theatres, and prefer seeing a mountebank stand on his head, to an able tragedian in the character of Hamlet!"

Owen, the hero of our rival establishment, was a great favourite in Bury, privately as well as publicly, since, in one respect particularly, he eclipsed all the "day-light actors" of his time. He could put off his vulgarity with his stage-clothes, and retain all his humour. There was a silk mercer, who had frequented Bury fair many years, and was remarkable for his imperturbable complacency. His patience was of a rival fame to Job's. It obtained him a continual reference. Some wags on this occasion determined to put his vaunted virtue to

the test, and procured Owen for their instrument, by laying a wager with him that he could not ruffle the worthy dealer's temper. Lewey immediately walked to the booth, (every feature of his public appearance having disappeared in his plain clothes,) and inquired for a particular silk. It did not suit him when shown, and he desired to see another; which was accordingly taken down and unrolled. That was nearer the colour, but wanted a shade of it.—A third. That was the colour, but of too fine a texture.—A fourth. That was too coarse; a medium texture would precisely suit.—A fifth—no :—A sixth—no. A seventh, an eighth, were taken down, rolled out, inspected and rejected. Still the mercer's patience was as inexhaustible as his stock,—consequently Lewey was not satisfied. After looking over nearly every piece in the booth, and heaping the counter, the chairs, and other goods, with their contents—papers, strings, and rollers lying about in confusion, Lewey at length espied one piece, (purposely overlooked till now,) which he desired to have a sight of. The obliging mercer

mounted a ladder, and with infinite difficulty obtained it; naturally expecting, from the particularity of his customer, that he intended to purchase the entire piece. Having placed it before him, Lewey unrolled it to the very end; and disengaging the roller, took it in his right-hand like a truncheon, and flourishing it gravely about his head, stuck it in his side, with these words—"Come, that will do; that will do! We've got it at last!"—"What will do?" exclaimed the mercer, with a stare of profound astonishment.—"Why, you must know, Sir," replied Lewey, "that I'm the principal tragedian in Mr. Griffith's company, and having to perform 'Richard the Third' to-night, which, you must be aware, can never be played without a good truncheon, I didn't see one in the stock to suit me, and have come out to buy one.—Pray what's the price of this?"

The mercer's virtue was of no longer being; he positively foamed with rage, and jumping over the counter, it is probable would have broken the roller over Owen's head, had not the projectors of the plot, who had watched the

whole scene from the door, run in to his assistance, and given an ample explanation. The name of Owen was in itself no small excuse ; but when his companions invited the mercer to a supper, and offered their assistance to put his goods again into order, the extraordinary flash of fire subsided to another long sleep,—like a volcanic eruption,—harmony was completely restored, and Lewey won his wager.

In the interim of the Norwich Theatre undergoing some repairs, a leisure week ensued, in which Mrs. Cooper and myself were united. With this accession to my domestic comfort, the enjoyment of my profession kept pace. Playing an extensive round of business, my benefits in each town attested my rising favour with the public ; and at Norwich (where we wintered) I became a marked object of approbation with the proprietors. Fame and fortune were thus flowing in upon me, who seven months before had struggled for shillings, and “strutted and fretted” on the flooring of barns :—when I reflected on the change, I could hardly credit it myself.

Our favourite amusements at "Norwich" were our "fishing parties," which were invariably conducted under the direction of Mr. Griffiths. A very moderate subscription defrayed the expense of refreshment, and Mr. G. provided the vehicles which conveyed us to the spot. On these occasions, Bob Bowles was the manager's constant attendant; who, being a little short-sighted, and extremely nice in his hands and clothes, required continual assistance, both to observe his float and put on fresh bait; this latter, ridiculous as it may appear, being what he termed a piece of dirty drudgery. He was a picture, at such a time, resembling some of the more whimsical but truly probable conceptions of Shakspeare (Justice Shallow, for instance), standing for hours together on the brink of the stream, holding in his white-gloved hand his taper dozen-jointed rod, in a variety of elegant attitudes, but seeing nothing of the float, in order to convince us, that though as fond of the diversion as Izaak Walton, he could only enjoy it in a genteel way. One day, every one had caught something but the manager,

who waited nevertheless, and took snuff from his brilliant box, with exemplary patience (fishing is certainly a school for this virtue). Bowles at length advised him to take some refreshment, and he would hold his rod. Mr. Griffith consented, and retired to a basket containing cold fowl and punch. His back was no sooner turned, than the wag drew up the line unobserved, and taking from his pocket a large Yarmouth herring which he had purposely brought with him, thrust the hook and bait down its throat, and threw it into the stream. When Mr. Griffiths resumed his rod, Bowles repaired to one or two of his chums, and told them what he had done; upon which one of them strolled up to the manager, and inquired after his sport. Griffiths had a hesitation, or rather iteration, in his speech, like Garrick. "Sport, sport," said he; "why, why, not so bad—plenty of fun, plenty of fun—good bait, you see, good bait; Bobby minds that—shady spot—deep hole there—all quiet, all quiet—had a hundred offers from the small fry, but wouldn't take 'em—plenty of bites, but caught nothing." You

have either lost your float, or you have got a bite now, rejoined the other conspirator. Griffiths, who couldn't tell whether this was the fact or no, immediately jerked his rod, and called for assistance : " Eh, eh, eh,—what—here, Bob, Bob—float, float—got a bite, got a bite !" Bowles ran up to him with great alacrity, followed by a group who were in the secret ; and as the manager drew the herring out of the water, he drew a shout from their lips ; this was construed into an expression of applause. Bowles then disengaged the fish from the hook, and handing it round to the company, asked if they had ever seen a finer mullet. Mullet, he was aware, was Mr. Griffith's favourite fish, and the announcement of the name threw the latter into transports. He repeatedly questioned Bowles if he was correct ; and Bowles, appealing to the bystanders, was borne out by a dozen affirmatives. He then put on his spectacles, took the fish in his own hands (divesting them previously of his gloves), surveyed it minutely, and concurred in the opinion. It was accordingly carried home to be dressed for supper ; and on the

following morning, when asked how he liked the mullet, he declared “ he had never partaken of a finer !”

This passed before my own eyes ; but Bowles gave me an illustration of the manager’s credulity, even more whimsical if possible, which occurred the year before I joined them.

Mr. Griffiths, Bowles, and two gentlemen of Norwich, were out shooting in the neighbourhood ; and, in the course of their sport, two ducks flying over, the manager aimed and fired ; a barn was close at hand, beyond which the birds disappeared. Bowles swore that Griffiths had hit one or both, and that they had fallen in the farm-yard. The hint was sufficient : away bounded the manager ; Bowles and his companions, who were in the conspiracy, following. Jumping over the gate, they ran into the yard ; and just then, an old weather-beaten, broken-backed, bandy-legged duck, a true devotee to mud and water, came limping by among some other fowls. “ That ’s it, that ’s it !” said Bowles ; “ you ’ve hit it ; I knew you did.”—“ Eh, ch, eh, where, Bob, where ?” — “ There.” Catching a



view of him, the manager commenced a chase through mud and slush, and tried to knock down his crippled victim with the butt end of his gun. Two or three times they ran round the yard like a hunt at Astley's, Bob and the others whooping and laughing, and giving the “view holloa.” The noise soon brought the farmer and his family from the house, and half-a-dozen thrashers from the barn, the latter of whom evinced a desire of verifying their names, by considering the bodies of our sportsmen so many trusses of straw. Mr. Griffiths, however, addressed the farmer, and an altercation ensued as to the identity of the duck ;—the former maintaining that he had hit the bird when flying over the barn, and that it had just fallen in the yard ; and the latter calling all his people to witness that the said duck had been a patriarch in his puddles these six years, and hadn't wing enough to fly over a turnip. The gentlemen at length interfered, and taking the farmer aside, explained the joke to him, and slipped a crown into his hand ; at which Bowles exclaimed, “ Oh, it's very right, Sir ; the farmer only meant to

say that he had a duck which greatly resembled this one.”—“ Ay, ay, knew so, Bobby ; you all saw me hit it.” The wink was now tipped to the flail-swingers, and a pursuit recommenced, when the duck was at length knocked down, pounced upon by Bowles, and popped into the bag. Griffiths now shouldered his gun, and marched off in triumph ; Bowles walked behind, putting his finger to his nose ; and the countrymen, unable any longer to restrain their gratification, clapped their hands to their sides, opened their capacious jaws, and lowed out their laughter like so many oxen.

I had been now about ten months in the Norwich company (having performed the circuit), and, as an actor, was worth about fifty per cent. more than when I entered it. Under a regular and judicious system, the various bad habits and ideas I had contracted in my eight months’ itinerancy speedily disappeared. Finding me not only pliant but grateful for instruction, Mr. Griffiths exerted himself in that peculiar element in which he had ability, the opening to me a knowledge of the mechanism of my pro-

fession, as the means of my attaining a good style ; whilst my wife and Mrs. Ibbot nearly as efficiently devoted my domestic hours to the same end. Such was my enthusiasm for acting then, that it constituted not only my means of subsistence, but my sole source of enjoyment,—a peculiarity of the profession, which accounts for the general indifference an actor manifests to the topics and objects which are interesting to the world, and also his willingness to encounter any privations that may attend the exercise of his art.

Every one knows that, to become a good actor, a man requires two essentials, — genius and judgment : his genius must be twofold,—the power of conceiving, and the power of identifying with character ; his judgment simply consists in expressing it. Thus, it has always appeared to me that, in one respect, the actor's genius is identical with the poet's ; since every author, when he sits down to write a play, must act it in his mind, and fully embody every character he delineates, otherwise there would be nothing life-like in his language,—nothing of

what is truly meant by the term “dramatic.” His genius is compounded of the power of invention, and the capability of embodying what he invents (the want of which capability has decided, in most cases, the fate of the closet play, and deciphers the mystery of so many plays’ failure). If then that which constitutes at once the difference and superiority of the author to the actor be the “power of invention,” in what consists the actor’s superiority to the mere reader or spectator? I answer, his superior power of sympathy (or identification): an equally just conception of the author’s meaning may be entertained by the latter, who, if a man of taste and judgment, would analyse most likely what he saw or read, acquaint himself with its elements and proportions, and refer the whole to a standard of poetic propriety; but he would still be as unable to embody Lear or Hamlet, as he would have been to invent them. But supposing this person to be possessed of the actor’s genius, or this power of sympathy, (and that there have been thousands of actors in the world who never trod a stage, I am

assured, since in my own sphere of observation, I can remember a hundred, and these not professed amateurs,) in what does the actor still maintain superiority?—in his power of expression ! It is the combination of science and genius which denotes him ; without the one he is but upon a level with the reader ; without the other, infinitely below him.

If my reader is fatigued with these definitions, I have a joke at the next page for him ; if not, a very few words more will illustrate the views with which a young comedian commenced his studies.

To the improvement of my judgment, my good friends in the Norwich Company directed their efforts (for if I had not possessed genius, it was not in their power to confer it) ; and as I was to learn a science, I naturally inquired what was its origin, or upon what was it based.

The professed (and Heaven forbid it should ever fail in being the practical !) object of the Stage is to instruct ; but people would not go to a theatre to receive a lesson in the same manner they enter a church. In the former

they require the pill to be gilded; the heart is to be approached, yet not through the judgment but the fancy: an illusion is therefore necessary; and the Stage, to attain it, is elevated one step above the truth. This one step precisely measures, in its altitude, the difference of sympathy in the bosom of the actor and spectator: Genius exalts him to his sphere; but when there, Science must uphold him. A system, and a system only, can enable him to tread midway in air between the heaven of fancy and the earth of fact. He there requires judgment to shape his conceptions into a conformity with the appearances of life, and yet preserve them from the exact resemblance which would destroy his elevation. He holds the spectator's illusion in his grasp, but which, like glass, is so delicate and brittle, that it is sure to shatter if he lets it fall. But the perfection of his skill is not, as I apprehend, merely to work the wires and conceal the hand, or, in other words, to make Art appear Nature; it is something more,—it is to make Nature appear Nature. It is to cause the nature which burns in his own bosom, to cor-

respond with that in the spectator's, by raising the latter up to the level of his own high excitement, and to open to the general sympathies of a crowd the confined and peculiar feelings of the poet.

As the Norwich season was drawing to a close, I received a letter from Mr. Hughes, the Exeter manager, conveying a very favourable proposal for myself and wife to join him at Weymouth in the ensuing spring, upon a two years' article. I had but little to complain of in my present situation, and much to be attached to; but the idea of visiting the early scene of my exertions was in itself so alluring, that I could not resist his offers; and, in addition, my wife was desirous of being introduced to my family. Our course was thus decided, and we bade a grateful farewell to Norwich, with about eighty pounds in store; a sum that at one time I did not think was possessable by an entire company.

The character of the good people who reside in this part of the world, whilst laying claim to as great a portion of integrity and generosity as

any others in Christendom, is (or was) nevertheless distinguished for a peculiar simplicity. It was quite common for a servant, who would come to the box-office to learn what was the play, and being informed "The Beaux Stratagem" and "The Virgin Unmasked," to go home and say we intended to do "The Boar Strangled" and "The Virgin Mary !" A grazier who had got into the theatre and seen Griffiths play Richard, on one occasion waited upon the manager the next morning, to say, that if the gentleman who wanted a horse on the previous evening held his mind, he had got an abundance of cattle in his meadows, and should be happy to deal with him.

Bowles took me to a club one evening, where the subject of public speaking being debated, a gentleman asked his friend, what he thought of Mr. Hopkins' style ; who replied, that he considered it to be very troublesome, and wished it was broken down ; as he had to get over it every morning in going to his farm, at the hazard of dislocating his hip.

I believe the joke is pretty well known of



the Norwich alderman, who being called on at a public dinner, when the cloth was removed, to give a toast, said he would propose one, which he had had the honour of hearing Sir Edward Afflick deliver at the breaking up of a party—"Here 's Bon repos, Gentlemen!" But one infinitely more whimsical than this occurred, during my stay at a dinner given by the "body corporate" to Sir Thomas Jerningham, the member. One of that illustrious number being asked (at a late hour in the evening) to name as a toast the finest demirep in Norwich! filled his glass, and, rising with formal politeness, replied, "Here's Sir Thomas Jerningham, Gentlemen!"

In passing through London, we delayed our journey a few days, and visited Covent Garden, to see the first representation of "The Rivals." It was so intolerably long, and so decidedly opposed in its composition to the taste of the day, as to draw down a degree of censure, which convinced me, on quitting the house, that it would never succeed. It must be remembered that this was the English "age of sentiment," and

that Hugh Kelly and Cumberland had flooded the Stage with moral poems under the title of Comedies, which took their views of life from the drawing-room exclusively, and coloured their characters with a nauseous French affectation. "The Rivals," in my opinion, was a decided attempt to overthrow this taste, and to follow up the blow which Goldsmith had given in "She Stoops to Conquer." My recollection of the manner in which the former was received, bears me out in the supposition. The audience on this occasion were composed of two parties—those who supported the prevailing taste, and those who were indifferent to it and liked nature. On the first night of a new play, it was very natural that the former should predominate;—and what was the consequence? why, that Faulkland and Julia (which Sheridan had obviously introduced to conciliate the sentimentalists, but which in the present day are considered heavy incumbrances,) were the characters which were most favourably received; whilst Sir Anthony Acres and Lydia, those faithful and diversified pictures of life, were

barely tolerated; and Mrs. Malaprop (as she deserved to be) was singled out for peculiar vengeance. To this character alone must be attributed the partial failure of the play.—Sheridan intended it perhaps as a burlesque upon the life which Faulkland and Julia represented—but he did it so grossly, as to defeat the end proposed. His want of judgment, in this respect, was as remarkable as his want of policy. That was a time in which there was not a greater straining for the proprieties of language, than the proprieties of character—the error of that taste was the considering the Stage an arena only for the exhibition of high and refined characters. But Mrs. Malaprop was denounced as a rank offence against all probability (which in dramatic life is possibility)—as a thing without a parallel in society—a monstrous absurdity which had originated with the author. Thus Sheridan's weapon was effectually turned against himself. The critics desired no better handle than he afforded them: and, in my humble opinion, their censure was highly judicious. In the present day, when the taste and

the feeling of that alluded to, has long been forgotten, what sensible mind is there that does not acknowledge, either in reading or seeing "The Rivals," that Mrs. Malaprop is a most vulgar intrusion, as far below the level of her companions in the comedy, as she would have been in real life?—Who can imagine for a moment that a lady residing at Bath, the emporium of fashion and good taste, visited by, and about to be connected with the family of a baronet, could have displayed an ignorance of language which would not have been tolerated in the most ridiculous milliner that supplied her with caps? Again, nothing can be more unfounded than the reason which is commonly assigned for the first night's failure of the play; namely, the acting of a Mr. Lee in Sir Lucius O'Trigger. I remember his acting very well; it was very indifferent, particularly to the audience, who cared as little about Sir Lucius as did Lydia; it was his juxta-position with Mrs. Malaprop that brought him into notice—her disease was infectious, and contaminated all that came into her society. The other charac-

ters were better drawn than his, and had the advantage of being supported by established favourites; but under any other circumstances, I will be bold to say, Mr. Lee's acting would have passed muster. It was therefore not less false than ungenerous in Sheridan (who originated this excuse) to transfer to the back of an unfortunate actor, a fault which was inherent to his own composition.

Of the acting of the night (seen under so much disadvantage), that which made the greatest impression on me was Shuter's in "Sir Anthony,"—the character fitted him like his clothes; all the others I have seen better performed since. Lewis was not at home in Faulkland; a serious sentiment was never upon friendly terms with his lips. Woodward would have played Acres better than the Captain, though not better than Quick: John Bannister's has been the best of any; but Shuter was inimitable in the full and racy humour which so peculiarly characterised the acting of the "Old School:" he was perpetuated only in my friend Joseph Munden; and in the touching simplicity

of his conceptions, has no resemblance at present but in the truth of Mr. Dowton.

From London we proceeded to Portsmouth direct, where my wife and self were received with the utmost cordiality by my mother and family ; and there we remained until the opening of the Weymouth Theatre.

Of the latter place I have nothing to remark, more than that Mr. Palmer, the Bath patentee, came over to see my wife perform, and offered us both engagements, which we were compelled to decline in consequence of our article to Mr. Hughes.

After proceeding to Barnstaple, we wintered at Plymouth Dock, which was exceedingly lively, owing to the detention of an outward-bound fleet by bad winds, and the arrival of a squadron from the Straits, under the command of a great patron of theatricals, Sir Edward Afflick. Our pit and boxes thus nightly presented a "uniform" aspect of "true blue."

Mrs. Bernard on her benefit-night received an unexpected compliment. We were playing "The Chances," in which my wife enacted the

"Second Constantia;" and when repeating the soliloquy upon her escape from Antonio, she exclaimed, "Well! I'm glad I've got rid of that old fellow, however; and now, if any handsome young man would take a fancy to me, and make me an honest woman, I'd make him the best wife in the universe!" A middy in the slips, who had never seen a play before, and took a deep interest in the scene, immediately started up, and leaning over the box, in a manner which made him conspicuous to the whole house, clapped his hands, and cried out, "I'll have you, ma'am; I'll have you; d—n my eyes, if I don't. I have three years' pay to receive, besides prize-money!"

The tumultuous shout which this reply elicited from the "Jacks," and the concentrated stare of the house, threw the young tar back into his seat in a state of some confusion. At Plymouth Dock I numbered among my acquaintance a Mr. Crouch, a young shipwright, (to whom I used to give orders for the play,) afterwards the well-known Captain Crouch, husband to the songstress; and Stephen Kemble,

one of my earliest and firmest friends. We were boys together then, I about twenty, he a year or two older, full of enterprise and sympathy, just entering upon life, and beginning to enjoy it. We lived in the same house, frequented the same clubs, cracked the same jokes, and sang the same songs; and many were the scenes dramatic and actual we went through together.

From Plymouth we removed for a short season to the early scene of my starving itinerancy, Taunton. If my reader can remember the manner in which I quitted this town, he may easily conceive my feelings on returning to it. The good people were nearly as much pleased at the change in my affairs as myself. Whilst here, my wife and self received an invitation from Tate Wilkinson, at York, to spend with him six weeks of the ensuing summer; for which he ensured us sixty guineas, he taking our benefits. This was an advantageous offer, and we accepted it. Whilst here also, Stephen Kemble came to rehearsal one morning, without his coat. Mr. Hughes, who was rather parti-



cular, inquired the cause. "Sir," said he, "the landlord of the house where I was reading the London paper, charged me double for my ale. I told him he had cheated me, and would not pay him. He seized me, and pulled off my coat; so, rather than submit to his extortion, I came away without it."—"But, Mr. Kemble," said the manager, "walk through the streets without your coat!"—"But, Mr. Hughes," said Stephen, "pay sixpence for my ale!"—"But your coat, Mr. Kemble!"—"Curse my coat, Sir; think of my feelings!"

Hughes sent and released his coat; but Stephen was quizzed a good deal for this independency; his last words, indeed, became a saying in the West of England, where, whenever a man determined to set appearances at nought, he would invariably exclaim, "Oh, curse my coat, think of my feelings!" The reader will smile at this, but I hope he may also be induced to give some credit to Stephen's character, since the above affords one of the strongest indications of that manly and independent spirit which pervaded him from childhood.

## CHAPTER VI.

1776.—Journey to York.—Highway Adventure.—Jemmy Whitely's Eccentricities.—The nodding Magistrate: his Professional Dignity.—The Fish Admissions.—His "Chinese Conjuror."—Macklin and his "Locke on the Understanding."—A dramatic "Icarus."—A Flight at Nottingham.—Tate Wilkinson.—Actors and Imitators.—Anecdotes of Tate's Career.—Imitation of Foote in London.—Imitation of Peg Woffington at Dublin.—Cummings, the York Favourite, his Voice.—Gallery Criticism on John Kemble.—Singular Coincidence in his Death.—Reminiscence of Dodd.—Wakefield.—Cummings in "Alexander" and the Critical Steed.—Anecdote of Tate Wilkinson, as a man.—Exeter Engagement at Bath.—Portsmouth.—The Pleasures of Rest.

INDEPENDENT of all pecuniary or professional advantages in my proposed trip to the North, I had a personal desire to see Tate Wilkinson, of whom every actor was talking and knew something but myself. Tate was the

accredited magazine for all the jokes, whims, and peculiarities which distinguished his great master, Foote,—and was considered as a sort of short-cut to the acquaintance of Garrick, Barry, Macklin, and a dozen more, of whom he gave imitations, both in and out of character; so that you had the originals before you in the full strength of their visible distinctions, with the permission of laughing at them if you pleased.

To pass over our journey more rapidly on the paper than it was performed in the coach; on reaching London, my wife and self paid a visit one evening to the Haymarket, to see Mr. Lee Digges make his *début* in *Wolsey*, (of whom more hereafter,) and started the next morning in a high-flyer coach, from the “Swan-with-two-Necks,” having two necks of our own, which we earnestly desired might be safe and unimpaired at the end of the journey. Disliking my place in the inside, which compelled me to ride with my back to the horses, I borrowed a great-coat from the box, and exchanged seats with a female who was posted on

the roof. We travelled all night; and in the morning, as we were quietly ascending a hill, a man on horseback rode up from a by-lane and called upon our Jehu to stop, having a few words to address to his passengers. What could be the nature of this stranger's communication caused a general sensation of curiosity,—but we on the outside surmised it, from a certain “argument” in his hand, rather noted for its penetrating effect—a pistol. He proved to be one of those “travelling collectors of coins” so abundant about the highways of England at this period, but more particularly indigenous to large uncultivated masses of land such as Hounslow and Finchley. There, indeed, these horse-pads sprang up as thickly as mushrooms, though not always of a night. I had sufficient presence of mind, in catching the first glimpse of him, to slip my watch into my boot and my pocket-book down my bosom; he therefore deprived me but of a few shillings, though many of my companions contributed all they had; passing his hat round to each of us, like a poor-box at a charity sermon.

Our Jehu had no arms, and looked as if he was much more inclined to use legs; yet, in the midst of such a scene of distress, I could not but be amused at the humour of the rascal's manner, who addressed us with the utmost pleasantness, inquiring of one person how was the wind that morning! (his object being to raise it;) of another, and a farmer-looking fellow, what prospects of the harvest! and myself (assuming, from my appearance, that I was of a gayer order than the rest), whether London or Bath was full just then? I could only remember that I was. To the females (who were all inside) he was a perfect Beau Nash upon horseback, begging, as he put his hat into the window, they would not be alarmed; apologizing for disturbing their slumbers; and stating that, as he came out that morning for the pleasure of forming their acquaintance, he hoped they would permit him to carry away with him some trifling remembrance. His pistol, like a hieroglyphic, speaking a sentence in its own character, supplied a key to his meaning; and jewels, rings, money, and watches, were rapidly dropped into

his hat from every one present, not excepting Mrs. Bernard. He then wished us all a very pleasant journey, and, putting spurs to his horse, galloped up the hill.

We arrived at Nottingham towards evening, and Mrs. B. feeling fatigued, I made an arrangement, with the coachman to proceed by another conveyance on the following morning.

On strolling about the town, I perceived a playbill, and at the head of it the name of that celebrated itinerant, James Whitely, or Jemmy Whitely as he was familiarly called, a son of Green Erin, and a worthy associate of those already recorded eccentrics, Thornton, Parker, and Bowles. The name and fame of this person pervaded the three kingdoms, and a hundred recollections of his personal and managerial peculiarities are now thronging my head ; but most of which, as their effect depends upon a certain dramatic illustration, I regret are untransferable to paper. Perhaps this is fortunate, for were the case otherwise, I might write ten volumes of recollections instead of two. I will however select a few which are treatable,

and the first to exemplify what I have just said.

Whitely, in the course of his itinerancies, once came to a village where the magistrate was distinguished for two things,—an infirmity of nodding his head, and a genuine Jeremy-Collier-distaste to plays and players. Jemmy, nevertheless, determined to wait upon him :—the magistrate was a butter merchant by trade ; and Jemmy found him behind the counter, industriously attending to the wants of a dozen customers.

“ Plase, Sir,” said Jemmy, taking off his hat, and bowing very low, “ My name’s Mr. Whitely the manager, well known in the North of England and Ireland, and all the three kingdoms, for my respectability of karakter !” The magistrate stared, nodded his head, and said nothing : “ and I have come to ax your permission (nod again), in passing through the town, (nod)—(there are no villages in dramatic geography,)—to favour the inhabitants (nod), of whose liberal and enlightened karakter I have often

heard (nod, nod), with a few evenings' entertainments" (nod, nod, nod).

The magistrate's horror at the request had sealed his lips ; but Jemmy interpreted the nodding of his head as a tacit consent, and a hint that he wished such consent to be kept secret from those who were about him. " O, oh !" he continued, " I understand your Worship (nod),—very well, Sir (nod),—mum, thank you, Sir (nod, nod),—your Worship and your family will come for nothing (nod, nod) ; good morning to you, Sir ; I'm much obliged to you, Sir ; St. Patrick and the Saints keep you and your butter !" (nod, nod, nod).

Jemmy then hastened to his myrmidons ; a room was engaged, the Theatre fitted up, and the play announced. The magistrate in the mean time was informed of their design, and ordered his constables to attend and take the company into custody. His indignation at what appeared to him an open defiance of his authority, suggested this secret and severer mode of proceeding. As the curtain drew up, a pack



of "dogs in office" accordingly leaped on the stage, surrounded their victims, and though they did not "worry them to death," they carried them off in their stage clothes and embellishments to the house of the magistrate, leaving the audience (who had paid their money) in as great a quandary as themselves. The magistrate had put on an important wig and demeanour to receive the culprits, and demanded of Whitely, with an accent like that of Mosop in *Mahomet*, "Had he dared attempt to contaminate the inn and the village with a profane stage-play without his authority?" Whitely civilly replied, that he had received it. "What! do you mean to assert that I gave you permission?" said the magistrate. "No, Sir; but I mean to say that you nodded your head when I axed you; and was not that maning that you gave your consent, but didn't want the Calvinistical bog-trotters who were buying your butter, to know any thing about it?"

A long altercation ensued, which terminated in the release of the Thespians, on condition that they instantly quitted the "town."

Jemmy, whenever he entered a place of importance, in which he could pitch his tent, invariably dressed himself in his Don Felix suit (pink silk and white satin, spangled and slashed), with an enormously long feather and rapier, and, accompanied by a boy with a bell, proceeded to the market-place, where he announced his intended performances (this was in 1776). He then waited upon the principal inhabitants respectively, to obtain their patronage. On one occasion, he entered the house of a retired tradesman, as vulgar as he was wealthy. Jemmy was shown into a room, where, in Oriental magnificence, the owner was reposing upon a couch. No sooner had the former disclosed the object of his visit, than the lordly adulterator of tea and sugar, eyeing him with an air of aristocratic contempt, exclaimed, "Oh ! you are what they call a strolling player, eh !" Jemmy's back stiffened in an instant from its rainbow inclination to an exact perpendicular, and laying his hand upon his breast he replied, "Sir, whenever I 'm blackguarded, I don't condescend to reply ;" he then turned away, and walked out of the house.

Jemmy was not particular, in poor communities, as to whether he received the public support in money or in "kind." He would take meat, fowl, vegetables, &c. value them by scales, &c. and pass in the owner and friends for as many admissions as they amounted to. Thus his treasury very often, on a Saturday, resembled a butcher's warehouse rather than a banker's. At a village on the coast, the inhabitants brought him nothing but fish ; but as the company could not subsist without its concomitants of bread, potatoes, and spirits, a general appeal was made to his stomach and sympathies, and some alteration in the terms of admission required. Jemmy accordingly, after admitting nineteen persons one evening for a shad a-piece, stopped the twentieth, and said, "I beg your pardon, my darling—I am extramely sorry to refuse you ; but if we ate any more fish, by the powers, we shall all be turned into mermaids !"

One of his expedients to invigorate the business when it was getting into a "decline," was to advertise what he called his "Chinese Conjuror," the phenomenon of a figure, which, by

internal machinery, would not only walk, move, and look like a man, but speak also — being capable of answering any question that was put to it, upon two minutes' consideration. The figure was made of pasteboard, with very ample habiliments, rather exceeding in dimensions the human form, and was managed upon the following system. After taking off its head, pulling aside its garments, and opening its breast, to show that it contained no human being, it was placed over a trap, up which an actor ascended, and took possession of its interior, unobserved. It then moved about, to the astonishment of the spectators, and sat down to be questioned. Meanwhile, the company having studied a series of questions and answers with the unseen confederate, had disguised themselves in their plain clothes, and dispersed about the front. By the variety and frequency of their inquiries, the mouths of the audience were sealed; and as each one, before he made an interrogation, took care to inform those about him of its nature, the truth of the replies involved the assembly in a sentiment of profound asto-

nishment. This took very well at first ; but if the voice of the machine, or the persons of the confederates, did not betray the artifice, on a succeeding evening some infernal Yorkshireman found his way into the pit, which answered the same end. On one occasion, a countryman, who happened to be suspicious, hearing a good deal of "Troy, and Rome, and Greece, and the Muses, and the kings of England, and Shakespeare" asked after and answered, suddenly got up and inquired of the figure what was his mother's grandmother's name !—Whitely, who officiated on the stage during this, was not confounded at the fellow's subtlety, but whispered the image, which immediately howled out in Irish, "*Ohil one Gruish kin agrany !*"—"There, my darling," said the manager—"there 's your grandmother's foldediddle for you."—All eyes were bent upon Tyke, who shook his head and replied — "Na, it beant—ma mooter's graunmooter's neam be Debora Dykes !"—"Well, you bogtrotter !" replied Jemmy, "and isn't 'Ohil one Gruish kin agrany,' the Chinese for Deborah Dykes ? and if you hadn't interrupted

the jontleman, wouldn't he have come to the dirty English of it presently?"

Here is another, to conclude.—When Macklin produced his comedy of "The Man of the World," Whitely, by some means, procured a copy of it before it was published, and announced it in a town where he was playing. Macklin happened to be passing through this place, on his way to Ireland, and observed the bill. Knowing that the play must have been obtained unfairly, a sense of his own reputation and rights carried him immediately to the manager, to demand an explanation. Whitely, however, not only evaded the charge by the coolness and comicality of his replies, but compelled the author to take refuge in his usual resource, when he would obtain a triumph over his professional brethren,—his intellectual attainments!

"Puh, Sir!" said Macklin, "you can't argue at all; you are a man of no information."—"What, Sir!" exclaimed Jemmy; "a man of no information! Prove your words, Mr. Macklin,—prove your words."—"Well, then," said

Macklin, taking cool aim at his antagonist's pericranium, with a question which he expected would crush him into nothingness,—“did you ever read ‘Locke on the Understanding?’” Macklin at this time had very little hair, but cherished a particular curl, which crowned the apex of his skull like a small ridge of snow. Whitely raised his hand to this tuft, and twinkling his eye with infinite sarcasm, replied, “And do you call this, Locke on the Understanding, Mr. Macklin?”

To proceed to the events of the night.—The performance was for the benefit of a person who, among other wonders to decoy the multitude, announced that between the play and farce he would fly over the stage from one balcony to the other! I had often heard of flighty people in the profession, but the design of this dramatic Icarus was new to me. By means of a cord suspended from the rafters of the roof, and attached to a belt which passed under his shoulders, he had planned the mode of his attempt, the proscenium being sufficiently lowered to conceal the artifice. I think I see the hero at

this moment before me. He was a large raw-boned fellow, with fiery red hair, which, as a mathematician would say, stood individually on the perpendicular. He was dressed like a Cupid, in flesh-coloured arms and leggings, with a linen garment about his middle, that somewhat resembled an abbreviated shirt divested of its frill; a wreath of roses circled his brow; a spangled belt his body; and a pair of infant's wings fluttered at his back, as the ostensible instruments of his intention. His appearance, however, when he came on to make his bow, before ascending to the pigeon-hole, created a favourable impression, and I heard some such colloquy as the following ensue between two farmers, who sat directly under me in the pit. "I zay, neighbor Jahn, be ye zhure thic be a mon? What be them things he ha' got on a shaulders?"—"Why daun't ye knaw, them be the wings he be gwaing to vly with."—"But I zay, Jahn, why do he wear 'em shirt ouver 'em clauthes?" This was a puzzler: at length John responded, "He do zeem as thau he'd no clauthes to kiver!" The fiddlers by this time



had given the "note of preparation," and Icarus put his head out of the P. S. pigeon-hole: expectation now stood upon tiptoe, and grasped each spectator by the throat, so as to occasion a great difficulty in breathing: all was in fact hushed to the profoundest calm, and at a sudden signal the fowl-man darted away from his perch, and passing under the skirts of the proscenium, gained the opposite side. A shout was rising in the spectators' throats, to announce the accomplishment of his task, when, either from nervousness, want of rehearsal, or a miscalculation, he unluckily missed his landing-place, and going against the first wing with a force which nearly drove it in, he rebounded from the shock like a tennis-ball; the impetus carried him back to the other side, where he was too confused to regain his hold: again he swang over to his original destination, touched his feet instead of his hands, again rebounded, and so continued to swing from side to side, like a shuttlecock between two battledores, or the pendulum of a clock.

The failure of the attempt immediately be-

trayed the artifice : the first expression of the audience was a common stare of astonishment at their own credulity ; the next, a hot flushing of indignation at their disappointment and the actor's impudence ; the third I expected to be the simultaneous burst of a theatrical tornado ; but the punishment which the criminal had inflicted on himself by the capers and contortions he was cutting to disengage himself from the rope, turned hissing and outcries into a hearty roar of laughter, which, after all, was the severest mode of expressing their malice.

The manager, during this, was in his dressing-room, preparing for Don Diego in " The Padlock," and hearing the uproar, (which was now augmented by thumping of benches and clapping of hands,) ran out upon the stairs, and beheld the unfortunate " high-flyer" suspended, like Mahomet's coffin, between heaven and earth. He was but half dressed, and but half made up, (*i. e.* eyebrows corked, and one cheek painted,) yet the sight disarmed him of every generous or delicate feeling, and he sprang down upon the stage, without coat, wig, or waistcoat, and with

a countenance that would have defied Lavater to have defined its particular genus or expression. First, he attempted to apologize to the audience, but rage choaking his utterance, he turned round to blackguard the actor: this being a more easy and familiar duty, his speech came freely, and the scene attained its highest effect. Never were a body of people more justified in laughing at the expense of a fellow-creature's feelings than on the present occasion, since I, who sympathized with the object, could not refrain; nay, I am assured, that if the Theatre had been the school of the cynics, and the audience its scholars, the same effect must have resulted. Cynics!—indeed, if they had been Pythagoreans, with the seal of a five years' silence on their lips, it is a question whether they would not have rendered themselves worthy of ejection. The curtain, however, speedily dropped, and I made my retreat.

With an account of this affair I amused Mrs. B. till our arrival in York, where we were most cordially received by Wilkinson and his family. Tate had a chatty and rather personable woman

for a wife, and a son, John, who had been tolerably educated, and was used to enunciate criticisms in the Green-room for the instruction of the actors. "Mr. Cummings," said he one day at dinner, "reads Shakspeare better than any man in England!"—"The present company excepted, Jacky," responded Tate, with a mixture of personal pique and paternal fondness.

Wilkinson is certainly one of the most well-known characters which the dramatic world in the past century produced, partly because he was the pupil and associate of Foote, partly on account of his talents and eccentricities, and partly in regard to his managerial importance. As a mimic or man possessing the power of readily discovering and adopting all the external peculiarities of character, perhaps he is the greatest upon record. The name of "Imitator" is so familiar to the ears of the present generation, that I should fear any explanation of its meaning would be deemed too gratuitous; but as there are a good many people in the world who draw no distinctions, perhaps my

reader will permit me to remark, that though acting is founded on imitation, it by no means follows that an actor and an imitator are one and the same thing. Acting is composed of two things,—imitation and identification. The actor must give the mind with the manner,—he is a creature of sympathy; the imitator is merely one of discernment. There is another kind of imitation, which relates to animals and mechanical sounds, and this no doubt requires its peculiar faculty; but whether the faculty of the actor and the imitator be identical or distinct, it being evident that the means of the latter are the physical requisites of the former possessed in a higher degree, namely, flexibility of voice and features! I think that the mimic is entitled to a modicum of praise, and that Tate Wilkinson, as the most highly gifted of mimics, should receive the utmost.

It is an old theatrical remark, that your sound actor is generally but as indifferent a mimic, as your clever mimic is a superficial actor;—that the one cannot confine himself to the surface of

character, nor the other go below it. Estcourt is the first instance upon record of a man who combined the abilities of both. Foote is the most splendid, and Matthews may be termed "the last one of his race." Estcourt is celebrated in having Colley Cibber for his historian, Foote for his various other and original qualities. Matthews, perhaps, stands more immediately upon the base of his own merits, and the public have long since determined their value. These are actors and mimics. Wilkinson was no actor; but of his talents as a mimic I will give a few illustrations.

Dodd and Mrs. Bulkley were now at York starring it; and Tate, Dodd, and I, dined together daily. When the bottle had mellowed the eccentric into good humour and memory, he would one day give us Shakspeare's "Seven Ages," distinguishing each age with the respective peculiarity of seven popular actors who played Jaques; at another time he would invent a game of whist between Macklin, Mrs. Clive, Shuter, and Mrs. Pritchard; again he would fix on a particular person, Garrick for instance,

and describe a scene between him and a sexagenarian washerwoman, who had brought home Mrs. Garrick's things instead of his, and was reading the bill to him. But the most amusing matter of his table-talk was his personal anecdotes, which, as they are not generally known, will answer my double object, by being transferred to these pages.

When Foote first discovered Tate's ability, he determined to make his introduction to the public a source of amusement to himself. Being advertised for a popular character, he rehearsed Wilkinson in it, not merely with the view of the latter's playing it instead, but in imitation of himself. This design was kept profoundly secret. At night the house was full; Wilkinson was dressed; and Foote retreated to his box, to lie in ambush, and watch the result. The great attraction was Foote, and expectation was in pangs for his appearance. Tate at length entered, and walked, talked, shuffled, snuffed, hitched, and fidgeted so like the real Simon Pure, that the hoax completely succeeded, and "Bravo, Foote! what fine spirits Sam's in to-

night!" were the general exclamations. Foote at that time experienced some enmity from the press, and the critics, as usual, lashed him for his performance; but on the same morning he divulged the joke, and at night led Wilkinson on the stage to introduce him to the public, saying, that "as they had received his Foote so favourably, he hoped they would now take him by the hand." Thus Tate rose immediately into notice, and Sam raised a laugh against his judges.

One of the peculiarities of Tate's voice was its sweetness. On his first visit to Dublin with Foote, they were engaged by Barry and Mos-sop, to give their entertainment on the alternate nights, with Peg Woffington's performance. Foote considered that it would be an attractive feature in the bill, if he announced an imitation of the above lady by Wilkinson; but the design coming to her ears, she sent Sam an abusive note, acquainting him, that if he attempted to take her off, she had some friends in Dublin who would oblige him to take himself off. Foote showed the epistle to his companion, who,



nothing daunted, proposed, that instead of an "imitation," they should give a scene from Alexander the Great, in character,—Foote mimicking Barry in the hero, and Wilkinson Mrs. W. as Roxana. Preparations were accordingly made, and their bills published:—what gave a greater zest to the announcement was, that Alexander the Great had been played the night before. Among the flood of spectators came Peg in person, and seated herself in the stage-box, not only to enlist the audience in her favour, and silence Foote by her appearance, (which was truly beautiful,) but if any thing occurred, to give the wink to a party of young Irish in the pit, who would rise up to execute immediate vengeance on the mimics. Sam and Tate were thus treading on the surface of a secret mine.

When Foote appeared, as he could present no resemblance to Barry but in manner and accent, the surprise was necessarily transferred to the entrance of his companion, a tall and dignified female, something like the original in face, but so like in figure and deportment, that

the spectators glanced their eyes from box to stage, and stage to box, to convince themselves of Mrs. W.'s identity. Peg herself was not the least astonished, and her myrmidons below were uncertain how to act.

Foote commenced the scene sufficiently like Barry to have procured applause, had not Tate thrown himself into one of Peg's favourite attitudes meanwhile, and diverted the attention. Eye and ear were now directed to the latter, and the first tone of his voice drew a thundering response from the lips of his auditors. As he proceeded, the effect increased; the house was electrified; his enemies were overpowered, and Peg herself set the seal to his talents, by beating her fan to pieces on the beading of the boxes.

Tate acknowledged this to be the greatest triumph of his life, and I can fully subscribe to its truth, since, in imitating that angel-toned woman Mrs. Barry, he needed but a veil over his face to have convinced me of her presence.

In this company I became acquainted with that northern star of the dramatic hemisphere,

Cummings, who so long, in the opinion of the York audience, maintained a pre-eminence over his tragic contemporaries. This must have been about the time of his *début* in the profession, and however he may have improved or declined since, he was an actor then of marked originality in characters like Hotspur, Alexander, and Chamont, and possessed a genius for the bold, the rugged, and romantic, which one would have thought had been inhaled from the woods and rocks he had been born and bred among. If his fame, however, extended beyond the sphere of his exertions, it led to no material results, as he concluded his career where he commenced it, and his name is only recognized now by his great natural qualification—his voice; this was indeed a “most miraculous organ.” Barry’s had more sweetness and flexibility, but Cummings’ the greater compass and strength. My reader from this will infer his great fault—the power he possessed seduced him into a habit of ranting, which the public being pleased with, confirmed him in. Thus, when John Kemble visited York, he was told

by the gallery, he “cud na shoot oot laik Coomens.”

The death of this gentleman was another of those singular coincidences of which John Palmer’s is a well-known instance.

He was playing Dumont in “Jane Shore” at a town in the York circuit, and in the last scene with his wife, when he had repeated the words—

“Be witness for me, ye celestial hosts,  
Such mercy and such pardon as my soul  
Accords to thee, and begs of Heaven to show thee,  
May such befall me at my latest hour !”—

he tottered an instant, sunk down, and expired. The audience, mistaking this for an intended “point,” rewarded him in the usual way ; but, alas ! he was for ever insensible to their notice ! real and mimic life were essentially mingled into a departed shadow, and the actor was now upon a level with the monarchs and heroes it had been his highest ambition to imitate.

I have one word to say of a comedian whose name is not sufficiently remembered—Dodd. He was “starring” it, as I have said, at York, in

his best characters. Dodd was the royal last one of the line of Fops whose dynasty commenced with Colley Cibber. He was a worthy associate of King, Yates, and Parsons; four such comedians, in my humble opinion, never having played together in any other country, or at any other time. Dodd is forgotten, because the characters in which he was eminent have ceased to interest on the stage, the originals that suggested them having long since disappeared from society; but, notwithstanding their memories are embalmed in "The School for Scandal," his compeers have not been more fortunate in escaping an unmerited oblivion, which is the fate of the actor who lives only in the memory of those who behold him; and, unless he has tact enough like Garrick or Foote to attach himself to the literary or fashionable history of the day, can claim no acquaintance with the generations that follow.

From York we proceeded to Halifax, where, the Theatre undergoing repair, an immense loft had been fitted up *ad interim*, under which was a livery stable. Here we had an amusing proof

of the power of Mr. Cummings' tones. Our opening play was Alexander the Great ; in the mad scene of which, when our hero sprang on the table and addressed his war-horse—

“ Bear me, Bucephalus, among the billows,”—

his voice swelled and reverberated to that degree, that the steeds below, identifying themselves with that noble animal, sent up a simultaneous response, and neighed their approbation for nearly ten minutes together. This unlooked-for compliment had an injurious effect upon the sensibilities of the audience.

At Wakefield our trip terminated. A week had scarcely elapsed in this delightful town, before I received a letter from Mr. Hughes, acquainting me that he intended opening the Exeter season a fortnight earlier than I had been apprized ;—my services were therefore immediately required. But five weeks of my engagement to Tate having elapsed, I was in some uncertainty how to act ; however, I took the advice of my wife, and carried the epistle to my manager. When he had looked over it, he returned it with a smile, and said, “ Well, it's

rather hard; but if you are bound to go, Mr. Bernard, you mustn't lose "the immediate jewel of your soul" on my account—your good name. Send off your boxes by the waggon to-night, and take your places in the morning coach, and settle matters before you start."

I have hitherto spoken of Wilkinson as a mimic,—I would wish to record a line to his memory as a man. We followed his advice in regard to our luggage and places, and breakfasted on the morrow at the inn, where we awaited his arrival. He came within five minutes of the vehicle's departure, bade us a cordial farewell, and slipping a rouleau into my hand, which he told me to look over on the road, hinted some engagement, and hurried away.

I have told my reader that our engagement was sixty guineas for six weeks, the manager receiving our benefits. We had played but five weeks, and a benefit in Wakefield was to come; consequently I conjectured that he would have deducted at least a third of the sum. On opening the parcel, I found the sixty guineas.

I take greater pleasure in recording this in-

stance of an actor's generosity, than in penning any eulogium to his talents: the latter, as I have said before, can only be appreciated by the few who remember him; the former, thank Heaven ! is a common object of value with all persons and ages whatever.

Proceeding southwardly, we reached and rested in the metropolis a day, and joined Mr. Hughes at Exeter on the morning of his opening performance.

The ensuing winter was spent not less to my pleasure than my profit; but as nothing occurred which would enliven these pages if transferred to them, I pass over the period with the simple mention of what is necessary to its historical connection.

Mr. Palmer, from Bath, paid my wife and self another visit, and secured our services for the succeeding season.

As the spring advanced, Mrs. Bernard's health appeared to have suffered from her professional exertions. I was accordingly induced to decline an offer from Tate Wilkinson to renew my acquaintance with the North, and accepted an



visitation from my mother to pass the summer at Portsmouth.

There, in the bosom of domestic comfort, one of the happiest portions of my life fled away. Mrs. B.'s health was invigorated. My appetite for acting abated, and it was not without a pang of regret that we received Mr. Palmer's summons, as defining the limit to our little term of enjoyment. So delightful is rest and relaxation, even to those whose being has been described as a fever, and whose history but one long wandering!

## CHAPTER VII.

1777-8.—Bath, Green-room.—Edwin's "Life and Eccentricities."—Edwin's merits.—Production of "The School for Scandal."—Sheridan's particularity.—Its success and "cast."—Anecdotes of Quin.—Sarcasm on Nobility.—Belief in Pythagoras.—Explanation of the superabundance of Women.—Mode of expelling a Bore.—Definition of a Gamester.—Cato-like complacency.—Reply to Ryan—His Siamese Soup.—Richmond.—Bob Bowles from Norwich.—A Doctor's Bill.—Fawcett and his Jokes.—Barry and the Barber.—Kitty Clive and Mrs. Cibber, Garrick's persecutors.—King and his "Barber's Pole."—Exeter.

1778-9.—Compilation of "The School for Scandal."—Privateer Speculation.—Does the "Fly" bite?—Becky Wells.—Dramatic transitions.—Exeter.

1779-80.—Doctor Jackson and his Pupils.—Anecdote of Incedon.—Anecdote of Davy's (the Composer) Origin and Musical Precocity.—Exeter.

1780-81-2.—Ireland.

It was in the winter of 1777-8 that Mrs. Bernard and myself made our first appearance on the Bath boards, (in Portia and Gratiano, to Mr. Henderson's Shylock,) and were favourably received.

Of the character of the Bath audience I have already made mention (perhaps unnecessarily) ; and every particular relating to the life, public or private, of Mr. Palmer, the patentee, is so well known, that I shall forbear putting my reader's patience to the test by any repetitions. It will be sufficient if I simply add my little mite to the solid store of a reputation, estimable as it was admirable, which, so long as the American war is remembered, must be linked to it by the subscription of nearly a million sterling, which that gentleman set on foot and collected in Bath, in aid of the public operations.

That the emporium of fashion, the spot which at that time concentrated all the rank, wealth, and luxury of the kingdom, should have been most adapted to the promotion of theatricals, can be no wonder. The proportion of those who went there for pleasure, always exceeded the body who were seeking for health ; and as our visitors were mostly birds of passage, the Theatre was a converging point, where strangers could obtain a view of the "beauty and fashion," without the trouble of an introduction. Our

boxes, indeed, did not much exceed in dimensions a large drawing-room,—with this difference, that a splendid party could always be entertained there without a *crush*. This was a fortunate state of things for Mr. Palmer, and he never had a more successful season than the present.

The principal members of our Green-room were Edwin, Dimond, Diddear, Blisset, and Rowbotham (Henderson was now engaged at Covent Garden). Most of these persons were men of ability and worth (Mr. Dimond in particular); but neither in their lives or characters presented any features which my reader would be gratified in knowing; whilst Edwin, with whom I was most intimate, and of whom my reader might expect some recollections, is a sealed book to me, I having assisted a gentleman, by the name of Anthony Pasquin, some five-and-thirty years ago, to write the “Life and Eccentricities” of the above peculiar human being and comedian. And now finding myself forestalled in the anecdotes of our companionship at Bath, which would have otherwise graced

these pages, I therefore pass on to other matters, with this little memorial to his merits.

Edwin was the greatest genius which, in my eight-and-forty years' acquaintance with the Stage, and some thousand miles' acquaintance with the surface of the earth, I have encountered. He was a natural comedian, or a man not so much distinguished for his insight into other character, as his absorption in his own: he had but one character, and was made up of but one ingredient—humour, which, like an inexhaustible spring, poured forth perpetually, colouring his public and private life with the same tincture. He required no theatre to give him excitement or exercise; lamplight and daylight had an identical influence; the street and the stage to him were synonymous terms;—in fact, he very happily confounded the distinction of the verbs, for “to act” with him was “to be.” One characteristic of his acting may be inferred from this,—want of variety. He was always himself,—he could not imitate: uninstructed by judgment, unsupported by rule, he did every thing from predisposition and

’impulse: no artist, like King or Yates, or even Shuter, he was simple Nature overflowing its reservoir;—like Weston or Parsons, but in a greater degree.

The first and greatest novelty of the season was the production of “The School for Scandal;” to superintend the rehearsals of which, the author came down in person. This was no slight compliment to the judgment of the Bath audience, who were to confirm or cavil at the verdict passed upon the merits of his composition in London. We were certainly not a body of clumsy or ignorant people in the Bath Theatre; but such was Sheridan’s particularity, that he took a fortnight to get up the play, and drilled all the servants and underlings himself: nothing, however, could be more pleasant or polite than his manner of doing so. In his sensitiveness as an author, he never lost sight of his propriety as a gentleman. The person that gave him the most trouble was Edwin, who was continually forgetting his business, making wrong exits, entrances, and crossings. Sheridan, with the utmost good humour, put him right every

morning. On the play-day, it was expected every gentleman would be as *au fait* to the mechanism of his character as the words;—every one was but John, who had been out to supper the previous evening, and spunged away, with the punch he had drunk, nearly all the remarks upon the "book and volume of his brain" Sheridan had made. The latter could not now restrain his feelings, but at the first lapsus shouted out, "Good God! Mr. Edwin, there you go again!—you've lost your situation, Sir!" Mr. Palmer was on the stage, and Edwin, cocking his eye on him, replied, "I hope I'm not discharged!"

The success of this comedy's production amply compensated for the trouble thus bestowed. The hit was even greater here than in town; on two accounts—the superiority of talent in its original performance, and the higher ordeal it was submitted to, being played before what is termed an exclusive box-audience. Sheridan had thus the gratification of meeting the full accomplishment of his ambition. I forget now how many nights it ran, but the cast was as follows:

<i>Sir Peter</i>	. . . .	Edwin.
<i>Sir Oliver</i>	. . . .	Blisset.
<i>Joseph</i>	. . . .	Dimond.
<i>Charles</i>	. . . .	Diddear.
<i>Sir Benjamin</i>	. . . .	Bernard.
<i>Crabtree</i>	. . . .	Egan.
<i>Lady Teazle</i>	. . . .	Mrs. Diddear.
<i>Mrs. Candour</i>	. . . .	Mrs. Bernard.

Mr. Keasberry, our acting manager at Bath, was an old standard in the Theatre, and a man of very great professional information. He was our Green-room story-book; and whenever his duty was suspended on the stage, would assume an equally pleasant one off. Of all his recollections, those which related to Quin (who retired to Bath on quitting London) were to me the most grateful.

The mere mention of Quin's name, I expect, has caused an erection of my reader's ears: he and Foote are considered by the public as a kind of "general dealers" in laughable commodities, inexhaustible springs of good humour, or amaranthine flowers of sentiment always



blossoming. The persons who have contrived this illusion are the editors of "Punster's Pocket Books," and the "Wit's Vade-Mecum," who not only rake and scrape the ashes of the past, to find their objects "gold and silver," but yearly affiliate upon those gentlemen a number of their own and other people's bantlings. If, therefore, (to carry on the image,) I introduce any of Quin's neglected offspring to my reader, I do it chiefly on the ground of their being legitimate.

An actor has certainly one thing to boast of—that the four greatest wits (*i. e.* most frequently quoted) of the past century were members of his profession:—to commence with that very reverend gentleman, Mr. Joseph Miller; Foote, Quin, and Charles Bannister; Sheridan even, who may be thought by many to claim pre-eminence, was the son of an actor, and the manager of a theatre. I pass over the question which would seem to grow out of this fact, (whether there be not something in the atmosphere of a playhouse conducive to the above ability,) to observe that, of these persons, Quin

and Foote associated with the best company, and that Quin, like Foote, was distinguished for a certain contempt for a portion of the society he courted, namely, the more noble but less intelligent.

Dining one day at a party in Bath, Quin uttered something which caused a general murmur of delight. A nobleman present, who was not illustrious for the brilliancy of his ideas, exclaimed, "What a pity 'tis, Quin, my boy, that a clever fellow like you should be a player!" Quin fixed and flashed his eye upon the person, with this reply, "What would your Lordship have me be?—a Lord!"

Quin was also distinguished for his attachment to the society of females; though the accounts which have been handed down of his rugged habits and propensities may have led my reader to the contrary supposition. Where ladies were present one evening, the subject of conversation was the doctrine of Pythagoras. Quin remained silent. One of the party (remarkable for the whiteness of her neck) asked Quin his opinion,—“Do you believe in the trans-

migration of souls, Mr. Quin?"—"Oh, yes, Madam!"—"And pray may I inquire, what creature's form you would prefer hereafter to inhabit?"—"A fly's, Madam."—"A fly!"—"Yes, that I might have the pleasure, at some future day, of resting on your Ladyship's neck."

There was infinite delicacy in the following: Being asked by a lady why it was reported that there were more women in the world than men, he replied, "It is in conformity with the arrangements of nature, Madam: we always see more of *heaven* than earth!"

The measure of his devotion to the fair could only be equalled by his detestation for those creatures of his own sex, who mimicked the former's accent and daintiness. Taking his soup one day at a coffee-house in Bath, two gentlemen came in and blockaded the fireplace, one of whom appeared to be a walking compound of wig, lace, ruffles, rose-water, and the Bath Directory. The room was rather full, and, for this reason, the latter person commenced a detail of his fashionable connections and advantages. Quin immediately desisted

from eating, looked up, and made wry faces. The sprig of jessamine was pleased, however, with the notice he excited, and continued in an effeminate tone sufficiently audible to disturb and disgust all around him, whose expressions he construed as the tokens of wonder or envy. Quin rose up and walked about the room; the lady-like creature paid no attention to this, but entered into a list of his weekly engagements, and numbered the peers who would be of the parties. Quin could contain himself no longer, and rang the bell furiously. "Waiter," said he, "bring me a bason."—"A bason, Sir!"—"A bason; I'm going to be sick." Away flew the waiter; and Quin, stepping up to the obnoxious person, begged he would delay his conversation a few minutes. The object stared as though thunder-struck, but was silent. The eyes of the company were now directed to Quin, in inquisitive surprise: the waiter returned; Quin took the bason and placed it on the table near his soup; he then unbuttoned his coat, loosened his cravat, and, leaning his head over the utensil, exclaimed, "Now, Sir, proceed when you like; I'm ready!"

His design and action convulsed the room in an instantaneous roar of laughter, which answered the desired end ; for the " young gentleman," becoming incensed, uttered a loud " demme," and made a speedy retreat.

There was some wit in his definition of a gamester, (one Major 'Townsend, a celebrated elbow-shaker of those times,) whom he compared to the sun, because he always set at night, and rose in the morning.

Quin played Cato very well, which I attribute to some constitutional resemblance between the two. He was generally " as cool (to use a vulgarism) as a cucumber." Some person whom he had offended, met him one day in the street, and stopped him. " Mr. Quin," said he, " I—I—I understand, Sir, you have been taking away my name !"—" What have I said, Sir ?"—" You—you—you called me a scoundrel, Sir !"—" Keep your name," replied Quin, and walked on.

Quin in his old age, every one knows, became a great gourmand, and, among other things, invented a composition, which he called his

"Siamese soup," pretending that its ingredients were principally from the "East." The peculiarity of its flavour became the topic of the day. The "rage" at Bath was Mr. Quin's soup; but as he would not part with the recipe, this state of notice was highly inconvenient; every person of taste was endeavouring to dine with him; every dinner he was at, an apology was made for the absence of the "Siamese soup." His female friends Quin was forced to put off with promises; the males received a respectful but manly denial. A conspiracy was accordingly projected by a dozen *bon vivants* of Bath, against his peace and comfort. At home he was flooded with anonymous letters; abroad, beset with applications under every form. The possession of this secret was made a canker to all his enjoyments. At length he discovered the design, and determined on revenge. Collecting the names of the principal confederates, he invited them to dinner, promising to give them the recipe before they departed — an invitation, as my reader will suppose, which was joyfully accepted. Quin then gave a pair

of his old boots to the housemaid to scour and soak, and when sufficiently seasoned, to chop up into fine particles, like minced meat. On the appointed day, he took these particles, and pouring them into a copper pot, with sage, onions, spice, ham, wine, water, and other ingredients, composed a mixture of about two gallons, which was served up at his table as his "Siamese soup." The company were in transports at its flavour; but Quin, pleading a cold, did not taste it. A pleasant evening was spent, and when the hour of departure arrived, each person pulled out his tablets to write down the recipe. Quin now pretended that he had forgot making the promise; but his guests were not to be put off; and closing the door, they told him in plain terms, that neither he nor they should quit the room till his pledge had been redeemed. Quin stammered and evaded, and kept them from the point as long as possible; but when their patience was bearing down all bounds, his reluctance gave way.

"Well, then, Gentlemen," said he, "in the first place, take an old pair of boots—!"—"What!

an old pair of boots !"—" The older the better ;"—(they stared at each other)—" cut off their tops and soles, and soak them in a tub of water"—(they hesitated)—" chop them into fine particles, and pour them into a pot with two gallons and a half of water."—" Why, d—n it, Quin," they simultaneously exclaimed, " you don't mean to say that the soup we've been drinking was made of old boots !"—" I do, Gentlemen," he replied, by " G—d ! my cook will assure you she chopped them up." They required no such attestation ; his cool, inflexible expression was sufficient : in an instant, horror and despair were depicted on each countenance, in the full conviction they were individually poisoned. Quin, observing this, begged them not to be alarmed, since he could contemplate no dangerous results from their dinner ; but if they thought it would sit uneasy on their stomachs, there was an apothecary's shop in the next street. The hint was taken : an idea of personal safety subdued the rising throbs of indignation. Seizing their hats, away flew the whole bevy down the stairs, and along the street to the place advised, where



ipecacuanha and other provocatives were speedily procured, and the "Siamese soup" (and all its concomitants) was speedily disgorged.

Mr. Keasberry engaged the Richmond Theatre for the ensuing summer, and made proposals to myself and wife to join him, which were accepted.

Richmond had an agreeable sound in my ears, on two accounts: it was adjacent to London, where I might run in occasionally and see an old friend; and it had advantages for fishing, a sport to which I was as much addicted as Bob Bowles.

Bob Bowles, by the by, was a member of the company. He had at length been detected in some gross trick upon his manager, and lost his Norwich situation. He had brought his wife with him, who was extremely ill, and thus deprived of her professional services; his own salary afforded but a meagre pittance for their support. The doctor, however, who attended Mrs. Bowles, contracted a great liking for her husband's society; and the latter, who was my invariable partner in a fishing excursion, would

send the "Son of *Æsculapius*" a brace of perch, or some other piscatory dainty, as a judicious mode of conciliating his temper against the day of reckoning.

At the end of the season, Bowles, not having a sufficiency of coppers to carry him out of the town, addressed a very lachrymose letter to the physician, entreating his patience till enabled, at some future day, to answer his demand. The humane man returned him a note to this effect:—

"DEAR SIR,

"WITH my sincere sympathy in your present situation, and best wishes for your future good fortune, I beg to enclose you the sum of one guinea, being the balance due to you as per bill annexed."

The bill was as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Mr. Bowles to Doctor . .	6	1	0
By perch at sundry times .	7	2	0
	<hr/>		
Balance due to Mr. Bowles	1	1	0
	<hr/>		

Another member of our corps at Richmond was a Mr. Fawcett, (father of the present comedian,) an understrapper at Drury Lane, who went on for such characters as a conspirator in "Venice Preserved;" worthy old servants who look intelligent, but say nothing; or dignified dukes, whose nobility consists in wearing ermine robes, and sitting at the top of a table. Fawcett, though a wretched actor, was a very pleasant fellow in company; he was another of that numerous class of persons on the stage, who are capital comedians in private life. Fawcett and Bowles were our Green-room battledores, keeping the laugh up between them with equal adroitness; but of all the things Fawcett repeated, (and his head was the repository of not a few,) those told the best which told against himself.

I will give my reader an example. He was a member of a club in the City, where his songs and jokes, and professional character, rendered him a man of note. One of his companions was a peaceable pains-taking barber, who always encored his effusions, in return for which Fawcett

gave him an order for a wig, and desired the knight of the curling-tongs to bring it to the Theatre on a particular night, and fit it on himself, when the actor had to perform a particular character, which depended more on its appearance, than its language. The barber, who knew nothing more of a theatre than its outside presented, supposed that Fawcett must be as great a man there as he was at the Club: punctual to his time, he accordingly strutted up to the stage-door, with no small importance, and was conducted to Fawcett's room. The wig fitted to a hair, and he received, with his customer's thanks, a direction to find his way downstairs. Making a wrong turning, he descended some steps which led to the back of the stage, and, meeting with no obstacle, strolled down to the second wing, O. P.

This happened to be the first night of Barry's performance, who was engaged for a limited period; and had stipulated in his article, that the same order and attention which was observed on Garrick's nights, should be main-

tained during his. Not a sound was to be heard behind the scenes, nor a figure to be seen, save the prompter at his particular post.

The Barber made his appearance at the wing, in the midst of Othello's address, and protruded his body so far as to become visible to half the house. The sudden glare of lights and human faces at first astounded, and then transported him, and there being no one in the way to remove him, he soon excited the risibility of the pit by his gestures and grimaces.

The Moor was not of a more fiery temperament than Barry, who attributed this intrusion to design, particularly when flashing his full eye upon the fellow, and interlarding his oration with side speeches, they, instead of effecting his removal, served only to stupify and root him more firmly to the spot. Part of Barry's speech accordingly ran thus:—

“For little of this great world can I speak”—(Who are you? What do you do here?)—“more, than pertains to feats of broil and battle;”—(I'll break every bone in your skin.)—“and therefore

little shall I grace my cause" (Will you be gone, Sir?—"by speaking of myself"—(An infernal rascal.)

To these several pointed addresses, the Barber yielded no other response than "Go to the devil!" which was loud enough, however, to be heard in the first row of the pit. Barry now concluded this to be a scheme on the part of Garrick, to ruffle and insult him; and when he quitted the stage, rushed on the unconscious criminal with all the fury of a hungry hyena, grasped him by the throat, shook him most unmercifully, and would no doubt have proceeded to determine how far the Barber's head resembled one of his own blocks, when the actors interposed, and set the man at liberty. Growling, and shaking himself like a tousled cur, he looked at Barry an instant with a smile of ineffable contempt, and then exclaimed, "Never mind, Master Sambo,—never mind,—I'll do your business for you, depend on it!"—"Do my business, you villain!" shouted Barry, "what do you mean?"—"Why, you black

rascal!" said the Barber, (evidently mistaking Othello for a *bona fide* Moor,) "I'll speak to Mr. Fawcett, and have you discharged!"

The merriment that Fawcett's name occasioned, neither suited Barry nor the Barber. — Garrick and Fawcett were summoned; and the latter, perceiving in an instant the truth of the case, explained his friend's ignorance and misapprehension. He was at length permitted to conduct the bewildered Barber to the door, receiving himself a broadside from the manager, as a means of conciliating Barry.

Whilst at Richmond, Mr. Keasberry one morning took me to pay a visit to Kitty Clive (an old acquaintance of his), who had retired to this neighbourhood to enjoy the fruits of her professional labours, like Miss Macklin. This lady and Mrs. Cibber were Garrick's perpetual persecutors; — one, with her sweet looks and silver tones, importuning him to patronize some poor actor, — the other, with her tavern-room clapper, dunning him for orders. Garrick very poetically used to compare the former to one of Milton's faithful angels, and the latter to the

impersonation of all the fallen ones. Kitty, whenever offended, would drive him about the "house," like a terrier after a rat, and abuse him to his face, till he was completely dumb-founded. One day he lost his patience, and exclaimed, "I tell you what, Mrs. Clive, I—I—I tell you what, Ma'am,—if you—if you repeat such language to me—me—David Garrick, who am your manager, I—I—I'll instantly discharge you."—"You dare not!" she replied. "I daren't?"—"No,—you know, if I was to walk out of your doors, you'd run to my house in a shower of rain, with your coat off, to bring me back again!"

Considering all the hurricane peculiarities I had heard of this lady, I was rather surprised to find her a very mild and agreeable woman, even in her own house, and under no excitation. She and Keasberry galloped over the track of past times with eminent fun and frolic. Of all people in the world, those of the "profession" are most fond of recounting their lives, and their's perhaps are the most amusing that can be recounted. So many thousand conver-



sations of this sort however have I heard, that I can remember nothing of the one in question, but a story which Mrs. C. told of King, who had been brought up a barber, and on his theatrical success not only disowned his early occupation, but was keenly sensitive of any allusions to it.

In playing a particular character one evening, which required a stick, King mislaid his own, and seized another at the wings, which was too large and clumsy. Garrick met him as he was going on, and observed it. — “Eh, eh, Tom, what’s that? that won’t do—cudgel, Irish shilelagh;—you’re a man in high life — ought to have a gold-headed cane.” King was conscious of its impropriety, and Garrick’s observation nettled him; he therefore answered rather testily, that “he had lost his own, and must use that, or go without one.” — “Curse it, Tom!” said the manager, “the people will say you’re going back to your old business, and have brought your *pole* with you.” The allusion was sufficient,—King threw down the stick, and ran about for another.

At Richmond I accepted an offer from my old manager, Mr. Hughes, to join him (with Mrs. Bernard) at Weymouth, and from thence proceed to Exeter, and I had sufficient influence to get my friend Bowles an engagement, his wife returning to her family till his circumstances renovated.

I pass over this intermediate spot to our winter destination, where I was welcomed by many old acquaintance, and found that a sufficient field was open to my exertions, the company of the preceding season having left an unfavourable impression.

Mr. Hughes, aware of this, proposed, as a means of bringing up his reputation, that we should come forward as soon as possible with some powerful novelty. "The School for Scandal" was then the general theme of conversation: it was the one topic in dramatic circles, and its appearance formed a sort of epoch in dramatic history. Its success at Bath had dispersed its fame about the West of England, and it was highly probable that, if the play were produced at Exeter, it would run a number of

nights to full houses. But the comedy was not yet published, and the managers, who had copies of it, had obtained them on condition that they did not permit the same to become the parents of others. This was a precaution of Sheridan's, not with any view of emolument, but in order to preserve his language from mutilation, and prevent the play being produced at any theatre where the proper attention could not be paid to its "getting up."

Under these circumstances, I offered to attempt a compilation of the comedy, if Mr. Hughes would give me his word that the manuscript should be destroyed at the end of the season. This was agreed to, and I set about my task in the following manner:—I had played Sir Benjamin at Bath, and Charles at Richmond, and went on for Sir Peter one or two evenings when Edwin was indisposed;—thus I had three parts in my possession. Dimond and Blisset (Joseph and Sir Oliver) transmitted their's by post, on conveying the assurance to them which Mr. Hughes had to me. Old Rowley was in the company, and my wife

had played both Lady Teazle and Mrs. Candour. With these materials for a groundwork, my general knowledge of the play, collected in rehearsing and performing in it above forty times, enabled me in a week to construct a comedy in five acts, called, in imitation of the original, “The School for Scandal.”

This comedy Mr. Hughes introduced to the public, (without any explanation of the above,) and it drew us crowded houses twice a-week, to the end of the season. By this experiment I added ten shillings a-week to my salary, and reduced my benefit charges to a nominal amount; but I derived little benefit myself from the circumstance, owing to another, which it may not be unamusing to relate.

About this time, war had broken out with Holland, and light-armed boats would run from Topsham and other ports to tow various lumbering, heavy laden Dutchmen into harbour, whose captains, knowing of the circumstance, had civilly invited the “Ainglesmen” on board his ship to take some grog and sourcrout. I belonged at this time to a musi-

cal club in Exeter, the members of which, seeing what money was to be made by these adventures, subscribed among themselves to fit out a cutter, and partake in the general speculation.

The money being raised, a boat was purchased—men were engaged—provisions laid in—arms were provided, and a captain of known courage and ability was selected for the command. On a clear spring morning, the “Fly of Exeter,” as the bark was denominated, gallantly sailed out of Topsham, bearing with her the best hopes and wishes of a concourse of spectators.

On the next club night, one of the members very kindly offered me a share, (£50.) being desirous I should participate in the means of suddenly converting my pockets into a Spanish mine. I had hitherto travelled and lived in great luxury, and fifty pounds I could not command; but this same person was so bent on doing me a service, that he put it to the Club, whether they would not be content to take the receipts of my benefit, more or less, as an equi-

valent for a share. It was carried *nem. con.*—As the house would not hold more than seventy pounds, and the charges were eighteen pounds, a slight reflection convinced me, that I could not pay more than the amount by this arrangement, and I subscribed my name to their list and articles accordingly.

The period of the cruize was to be a month,—which month, as my reader will suppose, consisted of one long dream of golden independence. At its expiration, to put an end both to fear and fancy, the “Fly of Exeter” returned,—but as pretty, as safe, and as ignorant of an enemy, or the ocean, as when she quitted us. The captain, indeed, swore that he had sailed fifteen hundred miles, meeting with nothing but a tar-barrel or some sea-gulls, and his men very faithfully bore him out. But the agent who shipped the stores, going on board to shake hands with him, contracted some suspicion of his story, from the fresh appearance of the vessel; and slipping down into the hold, unperceived, found all the provisions (excepting spirits) precisely in the same condition as when

they were received on board. These rogues had, in this instance, proved themselves fools also; for, had they taken the precaution of throwing the meat overboard, their secret would have been secure. The captain and crew were accordingly taken up and carried before a magistrate, when the truths of the case came out.

It appeared that, instead of proceeding to sea, the rascal of a commander put into Falmouth, where, preferring pretty girls, good grog, and a tavern tap-room, to foul winds, hard blows, and the hazard of a capture, he had moored his boat by the wharves, and obtained his crew's consent to pass the month in a hearty jollification.

They were sent, I believe, *en masse* to a house of correction: but our punishment was severer than theirs; for the affair getting wind, not one of the Club dared show their faces in the street,—the laugh was universal;—and I, being a public character, was considered legitimate game; for the little boys of Exeter, after that, would make it a point to follow me in the streets, and, twitching my coat, exclaim—

“ Mr. Bernard, Mr. Bernard,—does the Fly bite?”

Our season concluded very successfully at Exeter, both in respect to manager and company. “ The School for Scandal” had not only restored the lustre of Mr. Hughes’s reputation, but renovated the strength of his treasury. My benefit was appropriated to the payment of my “ Fly” debt,—(and no second trip being projected, the boat, after that, was suffered to go to pieces in harbour,)—but the loss was made up to me on my wife’s night.

It was on one of these occasions that, owing to some person’s indisposition, a very pretty woman, who had been some time in the company, playing trifling characters, was entrusted with that of “ Becky Cadwallader” in Foote’s farce of “ The Author.” Her success was so great, that she was induced the next summer to apply to the Haymarket for an engagement, where she appeared, and established herself as the greatest simpleton of her time. The name of Becky Wells will not soon be forgotten. This was one of those sudden transitions from obscu-



city to eminence, with which dramatic history is so frequently marked.

The ensuing summer we passed in a rapid flight over Taunton, Barnstaple, and other towns, and returned to our old head-quarters in the winter, having engaged with Mr. Hughes for two further seasons. As the events of this summer found no record in my journals, and my memory in no way rebels against my judgment, I pass on to Exeter, where I now became acquainted with the celebrated Doctor Jackson, and commenced an early and lasting intimacy with that "son of song," Charles Incedon, an intimacy continued in England twenty, and renewed in America forty years afterwards. Incedon was at this time a thin, lanky youth, giving some promise of his future powers, but more noted for a disposition like that of a Newfoundland dog—compounded of courage, gratefulness, and love of the water. All the stories in circulation respecting him were illustrative of one or the other of these qualities. The most well-known features of his early life, I believe, are his rumpus at school, and departure to sea,

over which I willingly pass, to record a circumstance more in honour of his character, and neither well known nor insignificant.

Some aquatic sportsman of Exeter had offered a considerable sum to any man who would swim down the river a certain distance, to a boat moored, with a rope round his middle, and bring back to his starting-point another. Several had attempted this feat, and failed. Young Incledon accomplished it; but this was not his ground of glory—he took the entire amount of his reward to a poor widow in the city, who had occasionally been kind to him, and was now fallen into distress. When Doctor Jackson heard of the circumstance, he was naturally alarmed lest his pupil should have contracted a cold which might injure his voice; but when Incledon explained the manner in which he had appropriated the money, the benevolent man was immediately subdued, and dismissed him with these words:—"Well, Charles, I'm not angry at what you've done; for if your lungs should be affected, your heart's in good order."

The companion of Incledon, as all the world

knows, was Davy the composer. Doctor Jackson, who communicated the above, gave me also the history of the latter person's origin and musical precocity, which as I do not think is generally known, I may as well introduce here, to conclude my chapter.

Davy, it appears, was an orphan child, left to the care of a poor relative, a weaver, at Crediton. This man was a humble musician, teaching the science of Psalmody to the village, and playing the bass viol at church. He had an old spinnet in his house (the gift of a wealthier relative), upon which he used to practise his tunes. Young Davy was always by his side on such occasions, and whenever he went away would mount his stool, and strike the instrument, in the endeavour to distinguish the notes. This amusement, however, not benefiting the spinnet, it was locked up; and the young musician, thus thrown upon his own resources, invented an instrument. He was at this time about six or seven.

Next door to the weaver's was a blacksmith's shop, into which young Davy was continually

running to watch the operations of the modern Cyclopidæ. He was thus enabled, unperceived and unsuspected, to convey away at different periods a number of horse-shoes, which he secreted in the unoccupied garret of the weaver's dwelling. Then procuring a piece of wire (from the same magazine), he attached it to two cross-beams, and on this suspended the shoes, assigning each its place in succession, and graduating a correct scale by the strength of his ear. He then obtained two sticks to strike them with, in imitation of the hand-bells which he had no doubt seen, as they were very prevalent in that part of England. So engrossed did he become in this new employment, that he not only gave up all his customary sports, but neglected his lessons and the family errands. He had sagacity enough, however, to keep the cause a secret, and fortune assisted him, till one day the weaver's wife going up-stairs to search among the lumber that the upper room contained, heard musical sounds, and stopping to listen, distinguished the outline of a psalm tune. However extraordinary the diversion,

she could only attribute it to the presence of the devil, and her fright had nearly the effect of precipitating her to the bottom of the stairs. Her husband was at home, and to him she descended and made known this mysterious circumstance. He had less superstition than herself, and ascended the stairs more boldly. The same sounds were audible, and peeping up, he perceived the young musician perched on a rickety, broken-backed chair, with his legs tucked under him, and his tiny hands thumping the horse-shoes, in the endeavour to form the same tunes he had heard his relative play.

The weaver was too pleased and astonished at this discovery either to chide or disturb him, but retired with his wife, and after some cogitation, determined to go over to Exeter and tell Doctor Jackson his boy's story, presuming that if he had abilities for music, that would be a better business for him than weaving, and knowing the doctor's character to be as eminent for generosity as musical science. The following day was accordingly devoted to the walk. The Doctor heard his narrative with mingled

pleasure and surprise, and agreed to ride over to Crediton and witness the phenomenon. He did so, and was introduced by the weaver to his house and staircase, where the same sight presented itself as on a former occasion. The youngster was seated on his chair, thumping his horse-shoes, and distinguishing their sounds. The Doctor could not control his transports, but sprang up into the garret, seized little Davy in his arms, and exclaimed — “ This boy is mine !”

My reader can imagine the scene that ensued : this was good fortune, far above the poor people’s expectations. Young Davy was then taken home to Exeter, and regularly apprenticed to his patron : his subsequent career is well known.

The two ensuing summers I spent at Weymouth, returning to Exeter in the winter, which it is necessary to mention for the historical connexion of these details ; but unluckily the period thus comprised being distinguished by no events my reader would be gratified in learning, I am bound simply to observe, that at Exeter, Mrs.

Bernard and myself received an invitation from Daly the Irish manager to pass the succeeding summer at Cork and winter in Dublin, upon terms that would enable us to combine profit with pleasure. We were induced to close with his offer, and directed our faces therefore to Ireland.

## CHAPTER VIII.

1782.—Visit to Ireland.—Cork Green-room.—Lee Digges, the celebrated “Wolsey:” his professional Fate.—John Kemble, Stephen Kemble, O’Reilly, Daly, Miss Younge, Mrs. Crouch, Miss Barsanti, &c.—Bob Bowles again ! his disqualifications.—The Pink Suits.—A Breach.—Miss Francis, or Mrs. Jordan · Tate Wilkinson her Sponsor origin of her name.—Another difference with Daly.—Kemble’s Sympathy.—Journey to Limerick.—Mallow.—Wild Irish Theatricals.—The Manager.—Mr. Macfarlane, the one-eyed Cupid.—Gallery and Orchestra Dialogue.—Public Control of Public Amusements.—Mr. M’Shane, a high Tragedian.—Mr. Waker, the low Comedian, and his nasal Appendages.—Motto of a Sign, “Pay to-day and Trust to——.—A Countryman’s Wit.—Irish travelling.—Limerick.—Exposition of a Family Mystery.—Anecdote of John Kemble and Miss Phillips.—Bowles in his Element.—Irish Calculation.—The Anti-Verminists.—Butterfelt.—Story of a Skull.

IRELAND, on many accounts, was the country of all others that I most desired to traverse. My father’s ancestors were Irish ; and from youth



upward I had been seeking to clear up the particulars of his relationship, which to me appeared very mysterious, as he was altogether estranged from his family, and would never divulge the grounds thereof. All that I knew was, that I had cousins living in Limerick. But another and perhaps a more agreeable stimulus, was the notion I had been taught to form of Irish character, by my father in particular, and the profession in general, which appeared to me to combine all those generous, sociable, and whimsical essentials, that go to constitute the firmest friend and the drollest companion.

Ireland, dear Ireland, land of whisky and waggery, of palaver and "purtaties," what a charm was in thy name for the exorcism of blue devils! what a prospect in thy sound of a new era in life, a Saturnalian existence of long laughing nights, and strange eventful days! Ireland, the precious soil consecrated in every actor's memory, by the dearest and merriest remembrances! Ireland, the proverbial "green spot" in the arid desert of the unfortunate comedian!

Previous to my setting out, I paid another

and a last visit to my mother, who was now approaching the limit of a life, which, in active benevolence to the creature, had been passed in practical praise to the Creator : over this meeting and parting, as something too sacred to be put upon paper, I willingly pass, as well as the details of an uninteresting journey, and beg to introduce my reader at once to the principal members of the Cork Green-room, then composing the best company out of London.

John and Stephen Kemble, Lee Digges, Daly, O'Reilly, Jack Kane, and myself; Miss Younge, Mrs. Melmoth, Miss Barsanti, Miss Phillips, (afterwards Mrs. Crouch,) and Mrs. Bernard.

My reader can require no introduction to John Kemble, a person whose history and talents have been as frequently served up as Garrick's; and as it is not my intention, in these pages, to put forth criticisms upon actors of whose merits the present day has had opportunities of forming its own opinion, I would crave permission to dwell slightly on others, who, possessed of solid claims to public favour, have sunk beneath the grasp of a peculiar des-

tiny. Passing over Kemble, therefore, I would touch upon Lee Digges, as an important example. Digges was an actor of superior merit, in the line of Mossop, and was acknowledged for many years to be the finest Cardinal Wolsey in England. It would be uninteresting to enter into any examination of his performance of that character, as the grounds for my assertion, but more to the purpose, if I answer the query, how an actor possessing the ability to earn such fame, should never have been established in London, as every man of genius is supposed to be a man of ambition, and London is the top round of the ladder, which all actors strive for ? The history of Cooke in later times affords a key to that of Digges. Digges, like him, was fonder of society than the Stage, (though by no means addicted to the bottle,) and cared but little for his public fame, so long as he found friends in the towns he visited, who would contribute to his social comfort. As both in manners and character he was fitted to obtain friends at all times, he passed his life in the country, without one metropolitan aspiration ;

and only, like Cooke, in his advanced years attempted to repair the injury he had inflicted on his fortunes. He appeared at the Haymarket in his favourite character, and succeeded; but the Winter Theatres at the time were stocked with too many popular people to permit his accession, and he returned to the country, to wind up his career in the circles where he commenced it.

On journeying to join Tate Wilkinson at York, it was my fortune to witness Digges's *début* at the Haymarket; and I remember very well the very trifling, if very true objection then raised to his pretensions, namely, that he retained too many traces in his style of the school in which he had been educated, — that which Garrick succeeded in subverting.

As Comedy represents the manners, and Tragedy the passions of man, and every generation has its own fashion, whilst human nature is immutable, we perceive not only the reason why those elegant pictures of past life, the “Way of the World,” and the “Careless Husband,” have been long consigned to closets, whilst

"Jane Shore" and "Venice Preserved" continue to be popular performances; but also, why every generation should have produced some change in the dramatic system, and created the rudiments of a new "school." There have been four distinguishable schools on the English or London Stage, since its restoration under Charles the Second. The first, that of Betterton, who modelled, in some measure, on the French taste; the next, Booth, Wilks, and Cibber's (in which Digges and Quin, Mossop, Sheridan, and Barry, were instructed); thirdly, Garrick's; fourthly, (which is the present,) John Kemble's. Now, as each of these schools was formed upon the manners of the day, (such manners only being considered natural,) it is very evident that every actor who continues on the stage above twenty years will outlive his school, and must, upon the London Stage, fall into neglect, or conform to the peculiarities of that which succeeds. But in those days, the communication between the dramatic world in London and the country was very slight; the system of "starring" had not come

in vogue, (which, with all its evils, is certainly serviceable as a conductor to the metropolitan battery, however feebly the shock may be given); and Digges having passed his days in seclusion, was comparatively ignorant of the change which was going on. When, therefore, he appeared in London, the peculiarity of his style, so opposed to the new and prevailing taste, was not, as it ought to have been, attributed to the circumstances of his life, but evidenced as a want of judgment. Nevertheless, the impression Digges produced in Wolsey, was a proof that genius, like water, (an indefinable element,) has a softening influence, however it is coloured. The public were his witnesses, that his powers of conception were eminent, and that the light they threw around him was visible, whatever the want of fashion in the socket from which they emanated.

John Kemble's was the best Wolsey I have seen since, but he built upon Digges, and fell far short of him.

To proceed with my Green-room catalogue :—Stephen Kemble requires no comments. As a

friend and a companion, no one knew him better or esteemed him more than myself; but, as an actor, Stephen never was great, even when weighing twenty-two stone. O'Reilly was called the Irish comedian, by way of distinction, and was original in one or two of O'Keeffe's farces. I can remember nothing more of him than that he seemed to be in the way of Weston, but not so good. Daly, our manager, had a good memory, a good person, and a good wardrobe, with good parts to play—which were the entire constituents of his good acting; but he was a manager, and could give away orders to get himself applauded. Miss Younge (afterwards Mrs. Pope), as a metropolitan favourite, is too well known to need any allusion. Miss Barsanti (afterwards Mrs. Daly) was the original “*Lydia Languish*,” an actress possessed of great animal spirits, and some knowledge of character. Miss Phillips (afterwards Mrs. Crouch) was then a girl of about sixteen, very beautiful, and very clever. Of Mrs. Bernard I have spoken before, and it would be a piece of matrimonial egotism to speak again;—

and of Mrs. Melmoth, the fair colleague of Miss Younge, I shall just say, in conclusion, that when very young, she had been carried off from a boarding-school by Mr. Pratt, under the name of Courtney Melmoth, being mutually fired with a passion for acting, and that after playing together in several companies, they had separated;—the former going out to America, where she purchased a plantation,—the latter becoming soon after distinguished as the author of “The Gleanings,” &c.

My reader must now prepare for a surprise: here was my quondam intimate again, Bob Bowles! I had induced him, whilst at Exeter, to apply to Daly; and the latter, being in want of a singer, accepted him. My reader may therefore assure himself that I have some whimsicalities in store.

To give Bob his due, he was a pretty singer; nature had gifted him with a full-toned, melodious voice, and he knew how to use it; but in order to strengthen the operas, he agreed to take the seconds, and enable Mrs. Bernard to shine in “Macheath” and “Young Meadows.”



Miss Phillips was highly pleased at this arrangement, for to Bob she somehow contracted a public aversion.

Every one must know, that knows any thing of the Drama, that all the heroes of operas are lovers, and that they are generally described as combining all the graces of Chesterfield, with the form of an Apollo Belvedere. The singing gentleman is sure to be selected by every other person in the drama, as a sort of moral May-pole, to be entwined with complimentary wreaths of roses. The dictionary is drained by the dramatist of all its adulative epithets, to paint him; and he is not only described by the good-natured father, the sensible servant, the affectionate butler, &c. as the amiable—the honourable—the generous—but as the young, the handsome, the affable, &c. &c. Now nothing could be more anti-sentimental or anti-amatory, than the face and figure of Bob Bowles:—the one was flat, broad, and bony, with indistinct water-blue eyes, and a peaked nose (to say nothing of his mouth); the other, long, thin, and unproportioned, legs and

arms hanging down like a pair of parallels, equi-distant and uneven, and the whole seeming to work (owing to a jerk in his gait) by internal machinery. He could never therefore make his appearance but he excited some merriment ; and Miss Phillips on their first performance sympathized so deeply with the audience, that she stuck in her first song.

The first thing that disturbed the harmony of our Green-room, originated in the caprice of the manager. We were to play " Know your own Mind," in which Daly did " Millamour," and myself " Dashwould." It happened that Daly had a favourite pink suit, in which he played all his genteel comedy characters, and on the evening of the above, had arrayed himself in the same, curled, powdered, and ruffled to the very height of ton. Very unluckily, I had a suit of the same cut and colour, which, unconscious of the apparel my manager would assume, I selected, and, after duly preparing myself, made my appearance in the Green-room. The counterparts we presented excited instant notice, and Daly and I strutted by each other

like a couple of cocks of the same feather. To a smile, however, succeeded a laugh, and presently a jest, which ruffled Daly, who stepped up to me, and in rather a peremptory tone desired I would change my clothes. I remonstrated, saying, that my lodgings were half a mile off, and there was nothing in the stock to fit me. But this would not avail: I should not go on the stage in clothes the counterpart of his. I proposed if he would lend me a coat I would put it on; but as it wanted only five minutes of the time, any thing more was impossible. He was imperative—I must either change the entire suit, or not go on. Piqued at the rude and vulgar mode in which he had conveyed his commands, I coolly replied, that “I preferred the alternative,” and walking up to my dressing-room, prepared to disarray. The play was now at a stand-still; but in about five minutes, Miss Barsanti ran up to me with a coat from Daly’s stock, conjuring me to put it on and dismiss all he had said from my memory. I had no hesitation in complying with her request, and settling my cravat, &c. I de-

scended to my duties. This little circumstance disconcerted Daly for the night, and bred a coolness between him and me, (I am ashamed to record it,) which eventually resulted in our separation.

Mrs. Bernard, after opening and succeeding in a great round of characters, unfortunately fell ill, and my domestic comforts were not less abridged than my pecuniary resources. Doctor Davies, the physician who attended her, was the means of my becoming acquainted with several families in Cork, with whom I spent many pleasant evenings. Among these was a Mr. Morgan, who had a lovely little girl under his protection, of great musical promise, that used to sing a song about her love for "Ti-mo-thy," with so much comic effect, that I was led to inquire its origin. I was informed that she had learnt it from a lady of the name of Francis, who visited the Cork Theatre the summer previous. This Miss Francis was Mrs. Jordan, who, quarrelling with Daly, went off to York, where she assumed her other name. As I had never heard that Miss Bland was married, I

afterwards inquired of Wilkinson the cause ; and he replied, “ Her name ?—Why, God bless you, my boy ! I gave her her name,—I was her sponsor.” — “ You ? ” — “ Yes : when she thought of going to London, she thought Miss sounded insignificant, so she asked me to advise her a name :—‘ Why,’ said I, ‘ my dear, you *have crossed the water*, so I’ll call you *Jordan*,’ and by the memory of Sam ! if she didn’t take my joke in earnest, and call herself Mrs. Jordan ever since.” This was Tate’s story ; but as it was told in his usually ambiguous way, my reader may attach what credence to it he pleases.

I have related the grounds of a breach between me and Daly : another circumstance soon occurred which widened it. There was a charitable institution in Cork, which proposed to take the Theatre for a night, but claimed the privilege not only of selecting the play, but casting the characters. Daly was well paid, and did not hesitate to agree ; but what was his surprise and indignation to find that the committee had given one of his principal characters to me !—yet this was not all ;—a young artist of

Cork, by the name of Pope, (afterwards of Covent Garden Theatre,) had written a prologue, and intended to speak it on this occasion; but sudden indisposition preventing him, the committee applied to me in person, to come forward in his room. Now Daly particularly piqued himself on his talent as a prologue speaker, both as respected deportment and delivery ; and this offence was more intolerable than the former. An altercation of his seeking ensued between us, and, instead of continuing with him for the winter, I was consequently induced to accept the offers of a Mr. Watson, who had come from Dublin to engage a company for the Capel Street Theatre.

In consequence of my wife's protracted illness, my resources became greatly straitened; and for the first time since I had quitted manager Osborn, did I experience the want of money. Stephen Kemble, my most intimate friend, had perceived this, but, unable to assist me, could merely sympathize ; — however, he mentioned the matter to his brother ; and one morning, at breakfast, John paid me a visit.

“Bernard,” said he, with a face and accent sufficiently full of sadness, “how is Mrs. B.?”—“Not mending.”—“And how are you?”—“Not mending either,” said I, attempting to be funny on a serious subject. — “Her illness must have been a great drawback, and upon one salary—” — “I have my benefit to look to, you know.” — “But that’s always uncertain,” he rejoined, with unpleasant emphasis; “but come, I haven’t called to put you out of spirits, but to ask you a favour.”—“Any thing that I can do, command me in.” — “Well, then, consent to make me your banker till better times await you.” — “Kemble,” said I.—“John,” said he, “here’s money to buy pins—marriage is chargeable;” with which words he gave my hand a squeeze, and left his purse containing five guineas in it. He then took up his hat and strode out of the room, with the same slow and solemn step that he entered it. This was a kindness I never forgot. John Kemble was a reserved man — a peculiar man — perhaps a proud man; but to the last hour of my life, I will maintain

that he was an honourable man, a faithful man, and a man of as much tenderness as integrity.

Within three weeks of our close at Cork we adjourned to Limerick for the assizes, returning to the former place to take our benefits.

This was a visit which, on a domestic account (already explained), I particularly wished to pay: making arrangements therefore for Mrs. Bernard's comfort and attention during my absence, I joined Digges, Bowles, the Kembles, and Miss Phillips and father, to proceed in a party; the company, as in general cases, choosing their own companions and modes of conveyance. Miss Phillips and her father decided on a chaise, or buggy; Digges and the Kembles on a light waggon; and Bowles and I hired horses, and agreed to act as couriers to the party, riding on in advance to order meals and prepare beds. This arrangement was particularly agreeable to Bowles:—we had now got into the legitimate land of fun and adventure, and Bob was determined to have his full measure.

At the little town of Mallow, our party halt-



ed the first night ; where no sooner was tea on the table, than a tall, raw-boned, badly-breeched, briefly-skirted fellow, with a shaggy red head, aquiline nose, and goggle eyes, presented himself at the door, and informed us that he was the manager of the Mallow Theatre. Having observed our party alight at the inn, he came to request the honour of our appearance in his boxes that evening, being assured that it would not fail in producing a corresponding effect in other parts of the house. Digges, Bowles, the Kembles, and myself, agreed to adjourn there. Miss Phillips was fatigued with her ride, and intended to retire early. The manager inundated us with acknowledgments,—laid his hand upon his breast, and retreated.

Shortly after, another visitor tapped at the door, and receiving a summons to enter, introduced his head only to our notice, from a motive of delicacy as I apprehended, his habiliments not being in a suitable state of repair. This head, however, was very singular,—it was unusually large and square, inclining to be bald, and thatched with indivisible black locks ;

a low forehead, high cheek bones,—the whole illumined with one eye. From a subsequent view of him, he appeared to be enveloped, rather than clothed, in a coat that buttoned up so high, and fell down so low, as to dispense with the concomitants of gloves or shirt;—the garment lapped round him, as a mainsail does a mast in a dead calm; but this sufficiency, however convenient, had an unpleasant appearance,—it looked like a demonstration of the doctrine of a vacuum. However, we were informed by this personage that he had lately been a member of the Mallow Theatre, where he performed all the lovers and harlequins—and that he had unjustly been deprived of his situation, on account of making his dramatic character practical, by playing the lovers off the stage as well as on, to a young lady who engrossed the manager's affections. Having repented of his penchant, and hearing that we were about to patronize the evening's performances, he entreated therefore the favour of our interference to procure him his reinstatement in the company.

At the first part of his declaration we ex-

pressed some surprise (namely, that he played the lovers with one eye) ; but when he alleged the ground of his discharge, Miss Phillips very ungenerously was induced to put her hands to her sides, and shriek with laughter. To the latter part of his address Digges, as our spokesman, very properly replied, " that being strangers to the manager, and totally disconnected with the interests of the Theatre, such an interference on our parts would be both fruitless and indecorous ;" but he requested that Mr. Macfarlane (our visitor) would call for anything he pleased, and we would drink to his better fortunes.

The language and appearance of this " one-eyed Cupid," as Miss Phillips called him, supplied her with food for meditation till bed-time ; but we were desirous of a farther insight into the peculiarities of wild Irish theatricals, and repaired to the spot under the conduct of a juvenile bogtrotter, who having to navigate a narrow lane diversified with puddles, jumped into each in order that we might walk round

them, but, in so doing, contrived to bestow on us a plentiful sprinkling of muddy spray.

The construction of the Theatre did not importantly differ from that of many I had played in in my earlier days. It was the interior of a barn; the hayloft being naturally adapted for a gallery; the boxes, formed by rough boards nailed to four uprights; the stage, being divided from the pit by a board bored with holes, as the sockets for so many candles, or foot-lights; the scenery was *secundum artem*, things of shreds and patches; and the green curtain a piece of grey antiquity that went up and down, in momentary danger of dissolution.

Our amusement commenced the instant we entered the house, in listening to a conversation that was going on between the gallery and the orchestra, the latter composed of a performer on the violin and one on the big-drum. "Mr. Patrick Moriarty," shouted the combiner of horsehair and catgut, "how are you, my jewel?"—"Asy and impudent, Teddy O'Hoone; how are you?—How's your sow?"—"Mischievous

and tender, like all of her sex.—What tune would it please you to have, Mr. Patrick Moriarty ?” Mr. Patrick was indifferent, and referred the matter to a committee of females. In the mean time Teddy began to tune up, at which another of his “divine” companions above assailed him : “Arra ! Teddy O’Hoone ! Teddy, you divil !”—“What do you say, Larry Kennedy ?”—“Tip us a tune on your fiddle-de-dee, and don’t stand there making the cratcher squake like a hog in a hollybush.—Paddy Byrne.” (to the drummer.) —“What do you say, Mr. Kennedy ?”—“An’t you a jewel, now, to be setting there at your ase, when here’s a whole cockloft full of jontlemen come to hear you thump your big bit of cowhide on the top of a butter-tub.”

A popular air was at length decided on in the gallery, and a general dance ensued, as a sort of active preliminary to the amusements to come ; but which proved highly unpleasant to us, who did not participate, inasmuch as the cockloft being rather wide in its seams, our hats and coats were presently covered with as thick a layer of dust as might have been

accumulated in a hundred miles' ride on the dickey of a coach. The exhilaration of the Gods, moving through their peculiar measure on “Olympus top,” and uttering their wild shrieks and cries, would have been rather amusing, had we not feared every moment that the loft would have come through. The unfortunate fiddler however, who was ministering with great diligence to their diversion, at length broke a string, and suspended it; but they were now in a state of too high excitement to permit accidents, or inquire into causes; and the musician's sudden defalcation from duty could only be looked at in the light of a personal affront. The gentlemen above-stairs had not brought pistols, but they had got *potatoes*; and my reader can imagine how they revenged themselves. A hurricane of epithets (too delicate to be repeated,) broke from their lips, and then each saltator grasped his potatoe, and, like a skilful body of engineers, directed a discharge at the pericraniums of the “band.” This active expression of their feelings was managed with such true aim and vigour, that the offender and his

companion made a speedy retreat behind the green curtain. The potatoes being boiled however, instead of inflicting any injury, conferred a benefit: the fiddler was enabled to *pocket* the affront. A terrible uproar now ensued, and the manager was called for, who, after some delay, put his head on at the first wing, to inquire the ladies' and gentlemen's wishes, fearing, as it seemed, to trust his *body* within their reach. He had then to assure them that the breaking of the string was purely accidental, and that Messrs. Thaddeus O'Hoone and Patrick Byrne were willing to come forward and make an apology. Their enthusiasm had now passed away, and the ladies and gentlemen were open to reason and benevolence. The musicians appeared, were received into favour, the curtain went up, and all was forgotten.

Of the performance I remember nothing more than the appearance of a Mr. Waker, a low comedian, and a Mr. M'Shane, a high tragedian: the first very happily illustrating his designation in his style; the latter in his height, six feet two.

Mr. Waker, some years previous, had been a great favourite in Dublin, but a personal affliction had unfitted him to maintain his standing, even with a Dublin gallery. Two immense excrescences had sprung out from his nose, and depended on each side like bladders of blood; their appearance was not merely ungraceful, but disgusting. That however which had lost him his situation in the capital, had procured him one at Mallow. Waker had a habit of shaking his head, (contracted perhaps in the nightly observation of a similar practice with his spectators,) and thus agitating the pendants to his nose, the delicate and decorous feelings of his Mallow patrons were stimulated to a roar of laughter. His acting was a compound of buffoonery and blackguardism, which, set off and supported by the shaking of his head, and dangling of his nasal appendages, formed an exhibition of which we soon had a surfeit. Of Mr. M'Shane the tragedian, all that I can say is, that though very long, we liked him very little.

On returning to the inn, we were struck for the first time with the sign, which was a red,



round-faced Hibernian grasping a punchbowl, and saying these words, "Pay to-day, and trust to ——" As this seemed to involve rather an important contradiction to us who were travellers, we required an explanation of the landlord, (a bald-headed, bandy-legged little fellow, with a mouth which, when unclosed, explained the clown's idea of an *open* countenance,) and were informed, that when his old sign of the "Man and Punchbowl" was worn out, Mr. Mic M'Cormick, a friend of his, had agreed to paint him a new one; but he being desirous that the latter should contain some motto or general rule of his establishment, as a guide to the traveller who gazed on it, he agreed with Mr. Mic M'Cormick, that the words "Pay to-day and trust to-morrow" should be inserted, the artist to be paid at the rate of twopence a word. When the sign was completed, Mr. M'Cormick had brought it home, but with the deficiency of the word "morrow," as above, which was owing to a want of room. The worthy host was not then, it appeared, so much concerned at this alteration, or rather destruc-

tion of his meaning, as about the settlement of the question, whether "to-morrow" was to be considered one or two words,—upon that fact depending the number of twopences he was to pay. After some argument between themselves, an umpire was called in, who deciding that "to-morrow" was but one word, the painter was deducted twopence, and the sign was put up.

On resuming our journey the next morning, we had not proceeded far before we came to so many intersections of the road, as to render it difficult to pursue; to say nothing of ditches, which were modest mill-ponds, and piles of stones like Indian "tumuli." We at length overtook a leathern-breeched, leathern-skinned fellow, with a pair of shoulders which would have fitted a chest of drawers, plodding on at a gait between a jerk and a shuffle, and asked him if the road we were pursuing would take us to Limerick? The rustic stopped, smiled, dislodged a flea from his ear, and replied, "No, no!" We exclaimed, "What will?"—"To be sure, your honour, the *road* won't take you to Limerick, but the *coaches* will!" Bowles laughed

at this absurdity; but I thought our situation too serious.

We at length learnt that there were two roads to Banff, and that we had taken the longest; that the road ran all the way to Killoccleen, being down-hill, and walked all the rest, being up; that there were sixteen miles of hills peeping over each other's shoulders, and divil a bit of a civilized being to be seen all the way, except a cow or a jackass, or any place of entertainment, save a little shebeen-house, with a pipe stuck in its thatch, suspending a red ribbon, to notify that a noggin of whiskey and clean straw were to be had within. We also learnt that there were half-a-dozen sloughs in the way, but that none of them were over the horses' shoulders, with many other interesting localisms which I have now forgotten.

Giving our informant a thirteener for his trouble, (at which he was so grateful as to wish we might tumble into the first bog we came to, to give him the task of pulling us out of it,) for my reader's satisfaction, as it was eminently to our own, I beg to announce, that none of these

anticipated evils befell us, and that we arrived safely in Limerick.

My first duty, on getting into lodgings, was to pay a visit to my family; Limerick being the ancient bed where the lineal tree of the Bernards had taken root, and hung out its branches. Mr. Robert Bernard, my uncle, was my nearest kin, and to his house I directed my steps. Nothing could exceed the warmth and cordiality with which I was received, or the astonishment manifested at the news that my father was still alive. He had run away from home, it appeared, when very young, walked all the way to Cork, where a fleet was lying, jumped into the water like a Newfoundland dog, with a bundle on his shoulders, and swimming to Admiral ——'s ship, threw himself before the commander, and implored to be employed in the service. His desire was granted; an action soon after ensued, in which he distinguished himself, and obtained a commission. He eventually rose to the post of first lieutenant, upon the ground of good conduct and ability; and having changed his name

from Bernard to Barnet, forty years had elapsed, and his family remained in ignorance of his fate.

Having thus ascertained a fact I had been seeking all my life to clear up, the fortnight we passed in Limerick I domesticated with my relatives.

In addition to the assizes, a review was to take place, this being a time of some political excitement both in England and Ireland. The latter was another cause which contributed to the filling of the town and theatre. John Kemble was a member of the "Dublin Volunteer Corps," which passed inspection on this occasion, and on the particular day was exempted from his dramatic to attend to his military duties. In the evening he dined with the corps, and when the glass had filled pretty frequently, a gentleman next him, being mellowed to that open communicativeness of disposition which so eminently marks the votaries of Bacchus, nudged John with a chuckle, and whispered in his ear, that there was a rare joke going on at the Theatre. Kemble was eager to know it.

“Why, mum,” said his companion; “you know, Lord Clanwilliam (who commanded a troop of horse in the neighbourhood) has laid a plan to carry off Miss Phillips after the performance; the officers are to assist him, and I was to have been of the party, only that I am much happier here.”

Kemble was completely sobered at this information; for at that time there was a growing attachment between him and the fair songstress; he had therefore observed Lord C.’s attentions to the former, but never suspected they were serious, or capable of resulting in such unmanly as well as illegal measures. But he kept his seat with that coolness which, always denoting courage, never deserted him, pretended to laugh at the affair, and plied his companion so briskly with the bottle, that the head of the latter soon sank on the table. He then made his retreat unobserved and unimpeded, and reached the Theatre before the farce had concluded. Within ten yards of the stage-door, he saw an evidence of what he had heard, a coach-and-four in waiting for his Lordship, and behind the scenes its full

confirmation,—an officer was lolling at each wing, and the noble personage himself sauntering backwards and forwards.

Miss Phillips' dressing-room was on a level with the stage, (being a disused property-room) and by its door, John took his stand, with the utmost decision but indifference. Lord C. and his companions were far from suspecting his design, but fearing he might be a hindrance to their's, endeavoured to draw him away, by inviting him to supper. John, however, steadfastly refused their temptations, and when the curtain fell, stepped up to Miss Phillips, and said in the hearing of all present, "I have been told, what I don't wish to believe, but have come here to ascertain, that a most unmanly and disgraceful plot has been laid to carry you off, after the performance, this evening."—(Actors, officers, and scene-shifters, stared in confusion. Miss Phillips clasped her hands.)—"Don't be alarmed," he continued; "I have come here to protect you; and if you do get into the coach which is waiting at the door, it shall only be by

your own consent, or when I have lost the power to wield the weapon at my side."

With these words he conducted her to her room, and, unsheathing his sword, planted himself before it, in a tragic attitude certainly, because it happened to be a very *serious* one. The regimentals he wore guaranteed his resolution, and the full proportion of his frame amply evidenced his power to carry any threat into effect. John was not *acting* now!

Miss Phillips, on entering her room, burst into a flood of tears; and the company gathering round, their persons, together with the looks of Kemble, led the officers to conclude that the stratagem was pretty effectually frustrated: they accordingly sneaked out, one by one, leaving their noble commander leaning in a kind of stupor against a wing. Miss P. at length quitted her room, and put her arm under Kemble's, who bowing to her admirer, conducted her out of the Theatre, and passed the group of officers collected near the door; neither obstruction nor insult was offered him, and he



left his fair companion at her residence in safety.

The next day this circumstance got wind, and neither Lord C. nor his troop would show their faces in the city. They laughed it off, however, in the usual way when schemes are frustrated, by saying it was a joke. But the public believed otherwise, and demonstrated their sympathy at Miss P.'s benefit; they also recompensed Kemble for the loss of his Lordship's patronage: certainly never did a private circumstance so suddenly exalt a man in popular esteem. Kemble's gallantry and courage were the general theme of conversation.

My reader will suppose that in the very heart of "Ould Ireland," and at a period and place when all was bustle and variety, our old acquaintance Bob Bowles found abundant game for his laugh-hunting appetite. The Green-room was a daily reservoir into which his observations were emptied. Bob had a great talent in detecting the more especial, if minute, features of the ridiculous in real life, and presenting them under some sort of dramatic form. He

was both a humorist and a mimic,—thus he gave the spirit with the manner. He related a conversation one day between two of the “darlings,” which, though requiring voice and features to give his effect to, as exhibiting some traits of Hibernian ingenuity, may be worth while to introduce.

His landlady was what was termed a “general dealer,” and, among other things, sold bread and whiskey. A customer entering her shop, inquired if she had any thing to ate and drink.—“To be sure,” she replied; “I have got a thimbleful of the crature, my darling, that comes ounly to twopence; and this big little loaf you may have for the same money!”—“Both twopence?”—“Both the same—as I’m a Christian woman, and worth double the sum.”—“Fill me the whiskey, if you plase.”—She did so, and he drank it; then rejoined—“It comes to twopence, my jewel—I’m not hungry; take back the loaf,” tendering it.—“Yes, honey, but what pays for the whiskey?”—“Why, the loaf, to be sure!”—“But you haven’t paid for the loaf?”—“Why, you wouldn’t have a man pay

for a thing he hasn't eat?"—A friend going by was called in by the landlady to decide this difficulty, who gave it against her; and from some deficiency in her powers of calculation, she permitted the rogue to escape.

Passing with Bowles one day down a back-street, we observed a number of children on both sides of the way, sitting before the doors, and combing their heads upon a pair of bellows, the broad surface of which afforded an ample field for the annihilation of their little victims. Bowles was immediately struck with the appearance of these anti-verminists, and stopped to contemplate the labours of one young lady in particular, who, differing from her companions, was going through the process with a cool and even mechanical regularity. "Innocent minds!" exclaimed I, "whom youthful sports and childhood's toils can please."—"All alive in this quarter, Jack," responded Bowles. As we passed on, the same scene presented itself at every other door—children of all ages and both sexes armed with the deadly apparatus of bellows and comb, against the lives of the unfortunate te-

nants of their heads. " 'This seems to be a general day of purification, Jack," said Bowles.— " 'Gad, there's a sympathy in it," pretending to scratch his head, evidently in want of an opportunity to exercise his waggish inclination. At length we came to a shop, behind the counter of which stood a red-nosed, fat-faced, vulgar-looking vender of edibles and drinkables.— Bowles, releasing my arm, jumped into the door, and taking off his hat, said,— " Pray, Madam, would you oblige me ?"— " Och," said she, " Sirr, you may have all I have got in the shop, and a great deal more." — " Then, may I request the favour of a pair of bellows, and a small-tooth-comb ?"— " Sirr !"— " I am a stranger in Limerick, Madam, come for the assizes ; and as I wish to partake in all the amusements going forward, I perceive that combing the head is all the rage in this quarter !"

There was no doubt a comical expression in Bowles' eye, for the lady made no other answer than the epithet—" Spalpeen !" and quietly reaching her hand behind her to a mopstick in a

corner, would no doubt have lent him much more than he desired, had he not anticipated this step by one of his own.

When the benefits were over, (of which mine was among the best,) I took leave of my kind friends and relatives, at the moment I was beginning best to know and esteem them, and in company with the old party, Bowles, Digges, the Kembles, &c. set out on my return to Cork, in the same order, and by the same means with which we left it.

Nothing worth remembering occurred on our way back, save this. To a little town called Butterfelt, Bowles and I rode on in advance, to order a repast. Giving the necessary directions at the only inn it contained, (or rather house making such public profession,) we took a stroll to view a very ancient abbey, which drags this obscure collection of human beings and houses into notice. Near the building stood the cottage of a Mr. Michael O'Galloghan, a superannuated Sacristan, who picked up some addition to his resources, by showing the "ould one" to travellers.

Travellers in general, I believe, enjoy the reputation of being liars; but if there be a class more entitled to the distinction, I should say it is the guides and conductors one meets with in travelling. The memory of Mr. Michael O'Galloghan is the ground of this opinion. Though an old man and an apparent Christian, the author of the "Arabian Nights Entertainments" never invented more startling impossibilities, nor Jack Palmer in his best days, as "Young Wilding," ever gave deliverance to falsehood more glibly. As a commencement, he informed us that the abbey was built by some companion of St. Patrick, who, disliking the long and laborious process of masonry, simply took his stand on the spot, and, at his bidding, the stones collected around him from the various fields, and proceeded to pile themselves up with due order and attention, till the building was completed.

There was a very beautiful view, however, from the belfry, and on descending to the churchyard, we were struck with the appearance of a mass of human skulls piled up in the

form of a cone. We were informed that these were the remains of a dreadful battle which had been fought in the neighbourhood many centuries previous, and that the priest having blessed them, a sacred influence consisted in their safe preservation.

On returning to the inn, we found our party arrived ; and whilst we sat down to what the landlord had provided, I entertained them with an account of our observations. “ Yes,” subjoined Bowles, “ it was all very curious ; but what pleased me the most was the skulls ; and that I might carry away with me a memento,—see—here is a *memento mori* !” Saying which, he gravely unbuttoned his coat and produced a skull.—“ I mean,” said he, “ to make it a present to Daly, when we get back—it is a capital property for Hamlet.—‘ Alas ! poor Yorick ! ’ ”

But the joke on this occasion was rather too grave : we had heard Mr. O’Galloghan say that the pile had been sanctified, and I could not help surmising, that if the theft was discovered before we left the village, serious conse-

quences might ensue. At this, John Kemble increased the longitude of his countenance an inch, and laying down his knife and fork, exclaimed—"Really—Mr. Bowles—if you go on in this manner—it will be—dan-ger-ous to travel with you—I appeal to—the company—if such conduct—is not——" But Stephen and Digges were roaring with laughter; and Miss Phillips, though she had turned away, saying the sight made her sick, could not now refrain, at the grimaces Bowles was making at his "property." He was besought, however, by all of us to return and deposit the skull where he found it; but this he refused to do, and put it in his bosom, saying, he had been told throughout life, that "two skulls were better than one," and he was now resolved to test the truth of the assertion.

My reader may probably surmise what was the effect of this occurrence—that we did not allot much time to swallowing our meal, paying our host, and jumping into or on our conveyances, nor that, having got upon a sharp trot, we desisted therefrom till many miles distant.



## CHAPTER IX.

1782-3.—Cork.—Two skulls better than one.—Journey to Dublin: humours of the carman.—A lame horse.—Whimsical adventure and hoax.—Dublin.—Remarks on the three Theatres: Daly's, Crawford's, and our own.—Mrs. Baddeley.—Royal criticism.—Ryder: his merits.—Versatility, the distinction of Garrick.—Mrs. Crawford.—Unfair comparisons between her and Mrs. Siddons.—Vandermere.—Crawford's commencement.—Humours of a "Free night."—Paddy Barret in Glenalvon, and his critics.—Our commencement.—Stephen Kemble's hit at a "Clapper."—Barry and Mos-sop.—Anecdote of their management.—Daly's success.—Our suffering.—A discovery among ourselves.—Flight of our Managers.—Isaac Sparks, the humorist.—Story of him and a Scotch doctor.—Crawford next on the decline.—Hamlet, playing Paddy O'Rafferty!—My engagement for Belfast.—Jack Barnshaw's reading.—Daly's generosity.—Mrs. Gardner's departure.—A grave joke.

OUR last performance but one in Cork was "Lionel and Clarissa," on the evening of which, half an hour before the time, Bowles, who played "Lionel," ran to my lodgings in breathless haste, to beg the loan of silk stockings, cravat, shirt, and gloves. On inquiring how he was

unprovided, and why he applied at such a late moment, he said that, when he quitted his chamber in the morning, he had laid all the things necessary for the evening's duties on his pillow, but on returning home found that they were gone,—a piece of magic which he could only account for by an uncharitable squint at his landlord's integrity, to whom, it appeared, he was somewhat in arrear. I accordingly lent him what he required; and the next day he told me that he had recovered his property by the following stratagem.

Whether host or hostess was the instigator of the theft, his suspicions fell on the chambermaid as the instrument, who brought him his breakfast and took care of the room. One peculiarity of the Irish character among the lower orders, he had long observed — their superstition, and on this he was resolved to work.

When he had risen and dressed himself, he opened his trunk, which lay facing the door, and thrust his stage foil into its bottom, on the top of which he placed the skull he had brought from Butterfelt, and over that drew his red

nightcap; he then tied a cross stick to the foil, and pinned around it a tragedy black robe, to give the phantom form as well as features. He then rang his bell for breakfast, and sat down to study, when hearing the girl's foot upon the stairs, he pushed the foil gently, and set the head a-shaking. The door opened—the girl ran in—stared upon it—started—shrieked, and staggering back to the bannisters, dropped the tea-tray, and all its contents over them. Bowles in an instant kicked skull, foil, and cloak into the trunk, and closed the lid; he then continued to read as if nothing had happened. The girl's shrieks upon the landing-place were so terrific, that her uncle and aunt (who were the host and hostess,) instantly ran up-stairs, and inquired the cause. Tears now succeeded yells, and hysterics tears, and between both she could only mutter—"Oh, oh,—the devil, the devil!"

The worthy people naturally conjectured that their lodger had been taking liberties with the girl, and entering his room, assailed him with a torrent of interrogations and execration.—

“Divil’s blood! Mr. Bowles, what have you been doing, Sir?—Oh, you wretch, Mr. Bowles!—you have been taking advantage of my poor girl’s wakeness.”

Bowles protested his innocence, and appealed to the girl as evidence.—“I haven’t quitted my chair,” said he; “and if I had wanted to be agreeable, the girl didn’t give me time,—she ran into my room and out again, before I caught a glimpse of her.—How dare you accuse me, who am a married man, of such an intention!”

They now returned in some wonder to the girl, who was sufficiently composed to acknowledge that Mr. Bowles had not been “playing the devil with her,” though the cause of her alarm she refused to divulge. His breakfast was accordingly collected from the shattered fragments of the tray below; and when he returned to his room after rehearsal, he found every article of his property lying on his pillow!

“There, Jack,” said Bowles, when he had concluded this account, “didn’t I tell you that I should find *two* skulls better than one?”

The same evening closed a prosperous season

at Cork. My benefit (in addition to that at Limerick) had enabled me not only to defray the expense of Mrs. Bernard's illness, (and discharge my obligation to John Kemble,) but as the physician considered she was too weak to undertake the journey to Dublin, to make every arrangement for her comfort, till able to proceed. I accordingly bade farewell to the many friends and associates I had found in this truly generous and warm-hearted city, and agreed to join Bowles, Mitchell, Jack Kane, Kennedy, Kelly, and Mrs. Taplin, (wife of the author of "*Treatises on Farriery*,") in a travelling party, the whole being destined for Dublin, though not for one theatre. As we were none of us overstocked with money, economy, and not convenience, was the ruling principle; and the following was our agreement:—To subscribe so much a-piece for the hiring of a two-horse car, to convey our luggage, the defraying of tavern-bills, &c.; each gentleman to ride so many miles a-day, in turn; and Mrs. Taplin, being a lady, to enjoy the privilege of riding the whole distance.

In this arrangement there was a certain pro-

mise of whim and adventure (independently of its cheapness), which, I must confess, tickled me to my heart's core. Bob Bowles himself was not more delighted with the prospect. Our measures were accordingly taken, and on a clear Autumn morning, by daybreak, we quitted Cork, with our luggage-loaded car—the driver, an especial “cracher” at the horses' heads; Mrs. Taplin seated at the top, with all the dignity she infused in Queen Elizabeth; and ourselves marching out two-by-two, with bundles, foils, and stage properties under our arms.

The first day of our journey passed over without much event; but we derived sufficient amusement from the peculiarities of the carman, a mop-headed, lark-limbed beauty, whose clothes were so ragged, that as he strode along with his coat, shirt, and breeches fluttering behind him, he put us in mind of a persevering ship making its way against a head-wind. This gentleman never whipped his horses when they were low-spirited and lazy, but reasoned with them as though they had been a pair of the Houynhmns, mentioned by Gulliver, or

intelligent Christian beings.—“Arrah, Barney,” (he’d say to the leader,) “arn’t you a pretty spalpeen to suffer your own brother Teddy to lug the car up the hill by himself? Haven’t I set you before him as an example? Have you any heart to forgit a friend bekase you don’t see him? Oh! bad luck to your faalings!—Arrah, Teddy, (to the other,) don’t you see, my darling, what Barney is at? he wants to rin away from you, and get to the little shebeen-house half a mile off, and ate up all your corn before you come.—Hurry, hurry, my darling, or divil the mouthful will he lave you!”

Strange as it may seem, these addresses produced the desired effect, and Barney and Teddy, as shaggy as a pair of lions, would pluck up courage, and pull along like a couple of camels. Observing that one of them was lame, we noticed this to their owner, as an infringement of our contract.—“Lame, your honor!” he replied—“No sich thing,—the boy’s quite perfect; only, you see, it’s a way he has of resting one leg till the other three are tired.”

At a little shebeen-house we stopped to refresh, where Bowles spouted “Romeo” to a fat

landlady, and Kane bought her sign as a "property,"—a red stocking. Over the door were these words:—"Mrs. Casey accommodates gonteel men and their ackipages, with a great deal of pleasure."

We had not proceeded a great distance the next day, when we reached a descent in the road, which led into a kind of pass between two hills, dark and rocky enough for a modern melodrama: its appearance, however, conjured up no unpleasant phantoms to a party like ours, and we proceeded, amusing ourselves with the usual resource—the recounting our early adventures,—when, in the midst of one of Bowles' best stories, a universal yell broke from the hills above us, and on both sides we perceived a dozen raw-boned, naked Patagonians running down with bludgeons in their hands. This was an "affecting situation," to speak theatrically: never, for an instant, had we contemplated such a visitation; for, having associated as a means of economy, and not protection, our poverty and our profession alike blinded us to the idea of being plundered. The novelty, not less than the peril of our situation, therefore, glared upon us



with a Medusa-like influence ; fear palsied every arm, congealed every heart, and muddled every head but Bob's, who roared out to Kennedy for his pistols. Kennedy was Daly's treasurer ; and having the last night's receipts in his trunk, had been running about Cork, be it known, to borrow weapons for its protection. This was a peculiar case ; but he struck his head with his hands, in reply, and exclaimed, — “ The pistols, the pistols!—By the powers! I have locked them up with the money !” There was no restraining a laugh at this, had we been at Death's door ; but the villains had providentially halted an instant, to observe us ; and Bowles, remarking it, promptly proposed that we should do something to intimidate them ; such as drawing our swords, and commencing a general combat round the car, Mrs. Taplin, (a tall, well-formed woman,) to act up to us, or rather down upon us. Approving the hint, we drew and fell to,—Macduff and Macbeth—Richard and Richmond—Hotspur and the Prince,—stamping, cutting, and thrusting at each other with the most inhuman gestures and grimaces ; Mrs. Taplin bending down on each side, stretching forth her hands

beating her bosom, letting loose her hair, (she did it famously,) to induce us to desist. The artifice succeeded,—the natives were completely overpowered; gazing upon us in awe-struck silence, as though we were of a kindred character—a band of rogues who had quarrelled among ourselves, and were bent upon a general destruction. Perceiving this, we gave the wink to the carman, and proceeded, continuing the fight with increased vigour, falling and reviving, and chasing each other about the car, with a medley of exclamations, such as “Die, villain!”—“Never!”—“Spare, oh! spare him!” (from Mrs. Taplin.)—“Renounce your claim!”—“Only with my life!”—“Then perish!”—“Ah! I have regained my sword; another chance is mine.”—“Lay on Macduff,” &c.

A gentleman on horseback at length rode up, who stopped at a little distance to observe us, and then politely inquired of Kelly, who was leaning on his foil and calling out for Richmond, (being actually very “hoarse with calling,”) what the devil we were all about, and who was that beautiful lady on the boxes?—Kelly shook his head, and pointed to Bowles, who, on being

addressed, asked the stranger if he could speak Hebrew, High-Dutch, the Cherokee, or the Russian languages. His interrogator said No; but he would talk Irish with any man on the sod!

Mrs. Taplin, I should have mentioned, wore a scarlet pelisse trimmed with fur, with a fur cap and gold band; which, on the head and limbs of a well-proportioned woman, had an imposing appearance. Bowles accordingly pointed to her with an air of great mystery, and said that she was the celebrated Empress of Russia, who had run away to Ireland, to raise a rebellion, and we were a body-guard, who had apprehended her in Cork, and were conveying her to Dublin Castle. At this intelligence, the man set off at full speed, and acquainted the people in the next village. We had now left our intimidated intimidators at some distance, and, proclaiming a truce, ceased fighting, to enjoy the joke. Much farther, however, we did not proceed, before every cottage began to empty its tenants, to have a peep at Royalty; and on entering the village, we had a train of

about one hundred of the greatest human curiosities in Ireland. We promoted the hoax by our own air and manner, till comfortably established in the inn, whose every window, door, and passage, was instantly blocked up with forms and faces eager to catch a glimpse of "the lovely cracher, the Imperial Quane in the red thingumbob, who had come all the way from Russia to emancipate Ireland;" as well as to larn the names and distinctions of "the Russian jontlemen who had cotched her in Cork, and were carrying her to Dublin Castle to be executed!"

Fearing, however, if the joke was not put an end to, that the multitude, in the true spirit of Irish heroism and sympathy, would entertain the wish of rescuing Mrs. Taplin and belabouring her guards, we called the landlord in, told him the whole affair, and desired he would go and inform our attendants that they had been hoaxed by the man on horseback, for they were pressing to see no Empress of Russia and body-guard, but Mr. Daly's company of comedians on their way to Dublin. He had considerable difficulty, however, in obtaining any credence to his story; and

when we quitted the hamlet, our line of attendants was scarcely diminished. With the humours of this adventure we amused ourselves during the remainder of our journey, which was performed in five very fine and pleasant days.

My first duty in Dublin was to dress myself with due attention, and wait upon my managers, Messrs. Truby and Watts, two very elegant gentlemen in deportment, but consummate scoundrels in principle: this secret, however, I was necessarily ignorant of, till the season had commenced; whilst every thing combined to give an air of prosperity and propriety to the concern. The Theatre had been newly decorated, was patronized by the Mayor, and had old Carmichael, a bluff, honest veteran, for the stage director. Having been engaged with my wife, at a salary of eight pounds a-week, to play an extensive round of business in comedy and tragedy, fame and fortune seemed to open their flood-gates, and I very reasonably expected an overflow.

Under these happy impressions, I sat down to pen a letter to my wife; after which I procured suitable lodgings, and established myself for the winter in Dublin.

This memorable season of 1782-3, three theatres were to contend for public favour:—"Daly's, in Smock Alley; Crawford's, in Crow Street; and Messrs. Truby and Watts's, in the Capel or Old Fishamble Street,—all enjoying the same licence, and ranging the same field, and only differing in the respective merits of their companies. It may not be unamusing to cast a rapid glance over the principal names that formed the rival hosts, and estimate the strength of each.

To commence with Daly.—He had John Kemble, Digges, O'Reilly, Dawson, (brother-in-law to Billy Lewis, and nearly as good an actor,) Bowles, and Jack Johnson; Miss Barsanti, Mrs. Melmoth, Mrs. Taplin, Mrs. Baddeley, (who had succeeded Miss Phillips,) and Mrs. Inchbald, subsequently the authoress.

Mrs. Inchbald was a pretty but not clever woman, with an impediment in her speech, which stage-fright always took away. This was a curious effect to observe behind the scenes.—Mrs. Baddeley was very popular in her day, for the harmonizing sweetness of her person and voice; unhappily, she was also distinguished for some

imprudences in conduct. A Royal Personage was very much pleased with her, to whom the latter circumstance being mentioned—"Well, well," said he, with a generosity which always characterised him, "she may have performed "Badly" in private, but in public she is very good indeed!"

The fate of this lady was another of the numerous instances of the "Jane Shore" class, which so sternly illustrate the results of a deviation from wedded duty. She had first quitted her husband—then quitted London (where she had been so many years established)—soon after quitted Dublin, and at length died in Edinburgh, in a state of the most abject distress.

Crawford (who had been bred up a barrister, but becoming enraptured with acting and Mrs. Barry, had embraced the one, and married the other,) numbered himself, which was not much, (more than that he had a party who could demolish a theatre, if they could not establish one,) his wife—a host; Clinch, (immortalized as the second and *successful* Sir Lucius O'Trigger!) La Mash, the admirable fop-servant, and Ryder, the ruling favourite of Dublin.

This latter was a comedian in the way of King, and, without being an imitation, presented as strong resemblances to the former in study, as O'Reilly did to Weston in nature. What the Dublin public thought of him was evidenced in a twenty years' standing, which not all the exotic talent of the metropolis could overturn. What I thought of him is quite unnecessary to state, since he came to London, and enabled its audience to form their own opinion. The secret of his failure I may however be permitted to state. It was precisely that of Digges: he had visited the English capital when somewhat past his powers, and found the theatre that received him plentifully stocked with established favourites. My reader must be aware that those were the days in which the Drama was in a plethora of health,—that the meanest actors then were good actors, and not a varlet would go on to deliver a message but he was a fellow of spirit and intelligence. Ryder, instead of returning to Dublin, (where a party would still have supported him,) continued in town, and soon sank into neglect.

For one thing, however, he deserves to be



recorded ; that which distinguished Garrick and Garrick's days, distinguished him—versatility. It has often struck me, that this is the only test by which you can try the merits of a comedian. A comedian must be an artist ; and mannerism, (or want of versatility,) which results from a peculiar constitution, though favourable to strong effects in tragedy, (as I have already explained,) in comedy opposes itself to the very object of the actor. Where manners, and not passion, is the principal thing to be exhibited, the man without versatility is continually presenting his own character to the audience, instead of the author's. This was Edwin's fault ; and how many comedians in a later day have played a variety of characters, and carried the same look and hitch, shrug and shuffle, cut and caper into each, whether young or old, vulgar or genteel ! But this was not the case with Ryder ; nor with Woodward, Shuter, King, or Parsons ; they could identify themselves with whatever they played, and express it properly ; particularly King and Woodward, who drained the entire stock of comic assumptions in high and low life, in Shakspeare and in farce. Garrick's

eminence in this respect was his only preeminence, and is sufficient of itself to decide the point. In his own day, he was deemed a better *comedian* than tragedian, of which his attitude in Reynolds's picture is a testimony, (where he is represented between the Comic and Tragic Muse, inclining to the *former*) ; but whilst even in comedy it has been questioned that his powers of conception were superior to Henderson's, it was at all times and upon all hands admitted that his power of expression (partly natural, partly acquired,) never met with an approach.

Of Mrs. Crawford, who, though upon the verge of fifty, retained all the symmetry of her person, and the sweetness of her voice, my admiration of her as an actress was so great, that I could only convey my feelings to my reader, by entering into an examination of some of her characters ; but as this might prove an uninteresting work after all, I dismiss her, as I have done others, with a short remark.

Never have two people been more frequently, yet more unfairly, contrasted, than Mrs. Crawford and Mrs. Siddons. That Mrs. Siddons was superior to her as a general tragedian, no

one could deny : in this respect, perhaps she was superior to any thing the Stage ever witnessed ; but that she surpassed Mrs. Crawford in her own peculiar element, the generation that saw and can remember them both, will never admit. The fact is, nothing could be more distinct than the respective spheres of their preeminence. Mrs. Siddons, at the height of her powers and success, was the *matron* of the stage ;—Mrs. Crawford, the *lover*. Mrs. Siddons claimed the dominion of the dignified, the vehement, the maternal, and the intellectual ;—Mrs. Crawford, of the tender, the confiding, and impassioned. Who does not perceive, in Lady Macbeth and Juliet, the difference of genius required to conceive each, and the difference of powers to give them display ? And this was the precise difference, in their best days, between Mrs. Siddons and Mrs. Crawford. The fact that the former lady succeeded in the latter's characters during her lifetime, is of no weight whatever. Young people can at all times assume elderly characters ; but the most general of all outcries is that against elderly people putting our gravity

to the test, by representing young ones. Mrs. Crawford (for the stage) was an old woman when Mrs. Siddons appeared: she was not entitled, therefore, to play her *best* parts, and had to maintain her popularity by others in which her talent was but secondary.—To come at length to Fishamble Street.

Our best actor was Vandermere, a broad comedian, something in the way of Parsons, but not so original. He with O'Reilly and Ryder formed a sort of histrionic triumvirate in Dublin. Stephen Kemble was engaged to lead the tragedy; and we numbered in addition—Betterton (father of Mrs. Glover), O'Neil (father of the "modern Juliet"), Macready (father of the present tragedian), Moss of Drury Lane, with Mrs. Gardner of the Haymarket, a chambermaid actress of great merit; and many others that it would neither be wise nor interesting to mention.

The first house that opened for the season was Crawford's; and he was obliged to commence with a "free night," by virtue of his patent. Thinking that there must be some

amusement, on an occasion when the doors of a theatre were thrown open, like those of a hospital, to take in all comers gratuitously, I resolved to adjourn to Crow Street, and witness the performance on both sides of the orchestra. If there was one particular spot in the world where every moral and physical cause could combine to render such an event more ludicrous than at another, that spot was Dublin. The idea of a Dublin gallery going into the boxes, pretty strongly defends my assertion. By an early attendance and a tremendous crush, (in which my ribs were like to have shared the fate of my hat,) I was carried into the house, through the pit entrance, and recovered my understanding within two seats of the orchestra. My reader must imagine the appearance of the front—I cannot describe it; as well as the roaring and filli-logging, and moving in and out. Soon after the doors were opened, it was packed in every part like a box of corks; and I only regret that my memory does not serve me to record some of the conversation that ensued between the “leedies and jontlemen” for this night only,

or sprinkle my page with a few of their jokes. However—

The play was “Douglas;” and on this occasion all the principals of the Theatre were exempted from duty, and the characters were allotted to understrappers. That of Glenalvon fell into the hands of a little black-browed, bandy-legged fellow by the name of Barret, well known throughout Dublin for his private particularities, and possessing at all times a great circle of acquaintance in Mount Olympus. The Irish people have great sympathy and enthusiasm; and notwithstanding their personal inconvenience, and the caricature daubings of the beauties of Home (the actors appearing to be all abroad when they were at home) then and there exhibited, they saw and heard the whole with profound attention. Barret’s entrance was the signal for an uproar; but it was of a permissible order. He was dressed in an entire suit of black, with a black wig, and a black velvet hat crowned with an immense plume of black feathers, which bending before him, gave him very much the

aspect of a mourning coach-horse. Barret had some vanity and some judgment ; he was fond of applause, and determined (to use his own phrase) to have a belly-full. He accordingly came on left hand upper entrance, and cutting the boards at a right angle, paced down to the stage-door right hand, then wheeled sharp upon his heel, and marched over to the opposite side ; his arms stuck a-kimbo, his robe flying, and his feathers nodding, in pretty accurate burlesque of the manner of Mossop. His friends composing a major portion of the audience, the clapping of hands, waving of handkerchiefs, and yelling of lips that greeted him, I, having no powers of expression to describe, must leave to my reader's " powers of conception."

When the tumult had a little subsided, Barret began to act ; but some of his more intimate acquaintance, taking a dislike to his costume, interrupted him with exclamations of " Paddy Barret, Paddy Barret !" Barret, however, was conscious of the proprieties of his station, and, turning a dignified deaf ear to such addresses, proceeded. His friends now resorted to a species

of notice to obtain his, which is beautifully peculiar to an Irish audience—"a groan for Mr. Barret." That happened, however, not to be the first time he had heard it; and as we pay little respect to things we are familiar with, Barret proceeded. The "darlings" were now stimulated to a decisive measure, by aiming an Irish apricot at his nodding plume, and shouting out, "Divil burn ye, Paddy Barret! will ye lave off spaking to that lady, and listen?" The potatoe triumphed, and the actor, walking forward to the lamps, desired to be acquainted with his patrons' wishes.—"Put some powder in your jasey, you black-looking coalhaver."—"Oh! is that all you want, my jewel? why didn't you say so before?—Put some powder in my wig! surely I'll do that thing; but I have ounly to tell you, my darlings, that I'm a Scotch jontleman to-night, and not Mr. Benjamin Barret; and so ——"—"Get out wid your dirtiness, Paddy—you chimney-swaper! you tragedy crow!—Do you think to bother us wid your black looks? Go and pōwder your jasey, you divil's own body-box-maker."\*—"Oh, to be sure, I'll do that

\* i. e. Undertaker.



thing." Saying which, he made a low bow, and retreated to the Green-room, leaving the audience and Lord and Lady Randolph to amuse themselves *ad interim* as they pleased.

Barret on this occasion wore a stiffly-starched lady's ruff; and the waggish barber powdered him so sufficiently as to lodge a ridge round his throat, and give him the face of the ghost of Hamlet's father. When he returned to the stage, he was received with a shout of laughter that threatened to rend the roof. Paddy bowed full low for the honour conferred on him, and was about to proceed, when the "Norman Quay" critics were at him again. "Arrah ! the boy's been in a snow-storm ! By the powers ! he has put his head in a flour-sack !—Paddy, Paddy Barret !" Glenalvon disregarded them some time with a very laudable spirit of contempt, till the yells, groans, epithets, and exclamations, swelled the diabolic chorus to a negation of the sense of hearing. He then came forward a second time to inquire their wishes. "Leedies and Jontlemen, what may it plase ye to want now ?"—"Put some paint on

your nose," was the reply. "What!"—"Put some paint on your nose, you ghost alive!"—"Paint my nose to play tragedy! Oh, bad luck to your taste!—I tell you what, Terence M'Mulligun, and you, Larry Casey, with your two ugly mugs up in the boxes yonder, I see how it is: the Divil himself wouldn't plase ye to-night; so you may just come down and play the karakter yourselves,—for the ghost of another line will I never spake to-night."

Saying which, he took off his wig, and shaking its powder at them contemptuously, walked off the stage with a truly tragical strut. The prompter was consequently obliged to come on and read the remainder of the part.

Ours was the next vessel that came into action. Having the crew assembled, Messrs. Truby and Watts resolved to take advantage of the wind, get the start of Daly, and bear down with a broadside upon Crawford. "The Merchant of Venice" was fixed on as our strongest play, and the Mayor and authorities being present with a brilliant assemblage of box company, the entertainments went off with so much

*éclat*, that we were led to augur favourably of the season. Stephen Kemble made his *début* in Shylock, and (Macklin being in London) was tolerably successful. Some clever rogue in the upper boxes however, who underrated his and our talents, and had come for the purpose of promulgating his opinion, perceiving that disapprobation in a crowded and contented house would be immediately silenced, employed the ingenious mode of appearing to be delighted with every thing, and thus clapped and bravoed to that degree, as effectually to disconcert the actors and disgust the audience. Against Stephen in particular was this covered battery directed, who winced and sputtered like a roasting apple; but in the trial scene he took signal vengeance. When addressing Gratiano he came to the words—"Till thou canst rail the seal from off this bond, thou,"—and (looking up, he added,)—"that noisy fellow in the boxes yonder,—but offend your lungs to speak so loud."

The allusion was received with universal approbation, and the enemy was silenced.

Our Theatre had been the tenement of Mossop

and Barry, during their Dublin career; and Carmichael our stage-manager, who was their prompter, told me many whimsical stories of their system and characters.

It appeared that both took an active share in the management, but divided their duties with much judgment and efficiency. Mossop presided on the stage,—Barry, in the treasury: the one engaged actors and cast pieces; the other paid the tradespeople, and settled the receipts. The personal characteristics of these gentlemen befitted them for provinces which were as widely distinct as their professional paths. Mossop, though intelligent and clever, was stern, proud, fiery, and commanding, making the business move with a mechanical regularity, and walking about immersed in the spirit of his profession, sensitive of his rights, and not less of his personal dignity,—in short, exhibiting, both in manner and mind, a living picture of his favourite Mahomet. Barry was soft, mild, conciliating, and persuasive, with a greater knowledge of the world, and more of the man of business, if not the gentleman.

When their concern fell into difficulties, Barry was perhaps the more important agent of the two; he possessed the tact to subdue the rising dissatisfaction of creditors. A tradesman to whom they had run very deeply in debt, having been promised his money several Saturdays in succession, determined at length to see and obtain something from Barry, or not quit the Theatre. Mossop, the day before, had been applied to by an actor who had partly been engaged in London, and was come to Dublin on the strength of an old agreement at a time when his services were the most inadmissible. *Mahomet* happening to be in the way when the tradesman called, mistook him for the rejected Thespian, and said rather sharply—"My good Sir, I'm sorry you should have given yourself the trouble of calling; I left word at the box-office yesterday, to say, that we could not attend to your application."—"Sir! Mr. Mossop!"—"I say, Sir, under the present circumstances of the Theatre, it is impossible we can do any thing for you."—"But you must do something for me. I will be attended to," replied the tradesman.—

“Sir!” exclaimed Mossop, in surprise.—“I have been put off a dozen times, Mr. Mossop, and I’ll not be made a fool of any longer.”—“D——n, Sir! quit the room!” shouted the manager, losing his patience. “I’ll not quit the room,” rejoined the determined dealer, “nor the Theatre, nor your presence, till I have had some satisfaction.”

Mossop, who was a powerful man, could talk no longer, but seized his applicant, with the intention of throwing him to the bottom of the stairs. Barry, however, providentially ran up at that instant, and prevented the catastrophe, by explaining the mistake.

The ensuing week Daly (to continue my former image) got under weigh, crowded all sail, and came up to us in terrible array. He had the strongest company,—Crawford the most popular house, with the two greatest favourites (Mrs. C. and Ryder). We had the smallest but most comfortable Theatre, with the best patronage.

Thus the experiment was tried of sustaining three theatres in a city which never has enriched one, not owing to the disposition of the

people, but the want of means. The result may be surmised. After the opening week, we all played to empty benches. As it soon became a struggle of dramatic talent, and not local circumstances, Capel Street was necessarily the first to suffer, and, Messrs. Truby and Watts not proving to be monied personages, the first to sink.

The object with which they had taken the Theatre now came out : it was intended merely as a blind to justice for the safeguard of a gambling speculation. A large disused lumber-room at the back of the house was fitted up in the most expensive style with all the infernal paraphernalia of the Goddess of Chance. Here all the richer but sillier portion of the audience was invited, when the performance was over, to take an active part in another, and pay a high price for their seat in the boxes ; Messrs. Truby and Watts, with a well-dressed party of confederates, acting as the decoy-ducks. But this abominable partnership of Plutus and Thespis did not long continue secret. Some of the poor devils who were fleeced made a public complaint, and the

amusement was stopped. So also were the resources of our managers: the Mayor could do no less than withdraw his patronage; and the public having long since declined their attendance, our receipts in a short time did not average sufficient to pay the fiddlers. The result was foreseeable, — neither tradespeople nor actors obtained any money; and Messrs. Truby and Watts, to avoid the growing inconvenience of such a situation, quietly took themselves off one evening, and left the Theatre, tradespeople, and company to settle the matter amongst them. The company had but one resource—the public; though, I am sorry to admit, they had but one ground of application—their necessities. But the Irish people, wherever their brains may be situated, have their hearts always in the right place, and sympathy extended to us what criticism denied. Our tradesmen were thus converted to the virtue of Job; and a temporary management being instituted, we received an accession to our forces in the person of Mrs. Bernard, (who was now completely recovered,) and that of a Mrs. Sparks, a singer from Edinburgh,



who, luckily for us, was a great favourite in Dublin.

The father-in-law of this Mrs. Sparks had been an eminent comedian and humorist in Dublin, at a previous period, where he founded a club called "The Jokers," which for many years concentrated all the wit and waggy of the metropolis.

Of the various stories which were then in circulation respecting him, I remember one, which, I think, may justify my calling up the memory of this long-forgotten disciple of Heraclitus, to introduce to my reader.

Isaac, or Iky Sparks as he was commonly termed, lodged on one occasion in a house with a Scotch doctor, who amused his leisure hours by learning to play the fiddle. These gentlemen, it must be remarked, were not upon the most amicable terms; the Scotchman turning up his nose at Sparks as a "vogabond Plee-actor," and the latter retorting by calling him a "legal Vampire," since he lived by the death of other people. The Doctor made it an invariable rule to rise at daylight to practise, about which

time the convivial Mr. Sparks was getting into his first nap. As their rooms were adjoining, it was a necessary result that Sparks lost his sleep; and it soon became another, that he should lie awake to meditate revenge. He did not like to leave the house (perhaps he could not), but he resolved, if possible, to expel this fiddling Macbeth "who murdered sleep," and was instrumental to his annoyance.

One morning, he heard Mr. M'Intosh the doctor desire Judy the servant, who waited on both of them, to go out and buy him a pennyworth of rosin for his "feedle;" and as she passed his door, he called her in, and inquired her errand.—"Sure I'm going to get some ros'n, Mr. Sparks, for Mr. M'Intosh's fiddle."—"Ros'n, ros'n, you crachur!" said Sparks; "and isn't ros'n you are going to ax for, Judy, arrant nonsense?"—"Arrah, Mr. Sparks!"—"Ros'n's Latin, my jewel: the shopkeeper won't understand you!"—"Latin! Och sure, Mr. Sparks, I know naughting of Latin; will your honor tell me what am I to ax for?"—"Say you want a piece of stick-brimstone, darling; that's English to spake,

and good Irish in the bargain." The girl complied with his direction, procured the brimstone, and returning to Mr. M'Intosh, presented it to him. "You dom b——h!" exclaimed the Scotchman, "what ha' ye broot me?—what do ye ca' this?"—"Brimstone, Sirr!"—"Breemstun! did I na send ye for roosin?"—"Plase your honor, and so you did; but Mr. Sparks tould me that brimstone was the raal thing to ax for."

Foaming with rage, away flew the Doctor into Isaac's room, (who was listening to the result,) and demanded of him how he dared to interfere with another person's affairs, and alter his commands to the servant.—"Why, Mr. M'Intosh," said Isaac very coolly, "what did you send for?"—"Roosin, Sir,—roosin for my feedle, and be domm'd to ye."—"Well," replied Sparks, "I always thought brimstone was rosin for a *Scotch fiddle!*"

Crawford's business was the next to decline. Daly, by means of "exotics" from London, and a succession of new pieces, contrived to concentrate the public attention. At length, no money coming forward on a Saturday morning, the

“band” rebelled, and refused to play at night. Crawford felt this the more grievous, as he was to enact Hamlet on that occasion. When the time of performance came, the truth was revealed to the audience ; not a fiddle was to be seen ; and, to all appearance, this heavy tragedy was to be gone through without a note of harmony. The gods of all nations, I believe, are fond of St. Cecilia, but none more particularly than those of Dublin, who vehemently roared out for their accustomed diversion. Crawford immediately walked before the curtain in his Hamlet’s clothes, and, detailing the circumstances of his situation, threw himself on the well-known, deeply-prized indulgence of a Dublin audience, to excuse the absence of the hard-hearted “ Priests of Apollo.” Crawford was a favourite in the city, upon many personal grounds ; but this was rather a large request, and considerable murmuring ensued. At length one of his auditors shouted out, “Divil burn it, Billy Crawford ! don’t I know that you play the fiddle like an angel ! tip us a tune yoursilf, my darling, and that shall contint us !” Such an act was certainly a compromise of his

professional dignity, particularly in the habiliments of Hamlet ; but, under the circumstances of the case, the manager conceived it justifiable. He accordingly acquiesced in their wishes with a low bow, and retreating to the Green-room, took down his violin, which hung there for the rehearsal of music, and returned to the lamps, when he struck up Paddy O'Rafferty ! and, notwithstanding his sable vesture, contrived to infuse sufficient spirit in it by the fling of his foot, and the bobbing of his head. The manner and the music had the desired effect ; an encore was called for, and the performance put the "divinities" in such perfect good-humour, that the play and farce proceeded and concluded without another note of music for the evening.

Ryder, finding that Crawford could pay no one but his wife, took a benefit, and went over to Daly :—this event hastened the close of the Theatre.

Ryder about this time was very fortunate in getting three thousand pounds by the Lottery. He had purchased a ticket two years before,

which at the drawing he had mislaid and forgotten. A tradesman calling on him for a bill which had been already paid, Ryder said he could produce the receipt if he looked over his papers. The honest person, who could not recollect this circumstance, but wished to re-collect his money, was therefore ordered to call again ; and he set to work in investigating his drawers. The receipt he did not find, but he lit upon the Lottery ticket, which he thrust into his pocket. That evening he was invited out to supper, and went in a very ill-temper, at the prospect of paying a debt he did not owe, and being so obliged through his own neglect : at table he related the case, and drawing out of his pocket the ticket, exclaimed, " So, after hunting every drawer and pigeon-hole I had, and inspecting in particular a large bundle of receipts, I found nothing but this old Lottery ticket, and be cursed to it !—one that my wife made me buy two years ago." A gentleman present looked at the number, and acquainted Ryder that he was the owner of the unclaimed prize. Whether he paid the trades-

man or not, in the flush of his good fortune, I cannot say ; but for that evening his spirits were as happy as usual.

Every attempt that we had made to bolster up the season having failed, the prospect was now apparent of its speedy termination. This event was not to be attributed to the public, who, by various good houses, had set us upon our legs, and given us a fair trial. The company began therefore to reflect on their next destinations. Such is the life of an actor ! who, after all, comes the nearest to an evidence of the perpetual motion.—Stephen Kemble was going over to Daly,—Betterton had quitted us soon after Messrs. Truby and Watts,—Macready and O'Neil, my very worthy friends, were proceeding to Belfast. I therefore seemed to be the only one unprovided, when Macready one morning brought Andrew Cherry to my lodgings, who had come from Atkins, the Belfast manager, expressly to secure the services of my wife and self. The terms he offered were by no means such as to take advantage of my present situation, and I was happy to accept them.

Jack Barnshaw, our singer, was going back to Liverpool.—(Bowles, who was with Daly, returned to Norwich, where he died.)—This person had been brought up a butcher, and received no education,—his ideas were therefore on a par with his manners; but the gift of a pleasant full-toned voice had enabled him to embark and make his way on the stage: scarcely a night passed but Jack made some egregious blunder, which would puzzle the audience, and convulse the actors with laughter. Playing Leander, one evening, in “The Padlock,” when he addressed Leonora, and said—“Beauteous Leonora! have you not observed a pilgrim at your gate, who has often watched you?” he continued,—“I am that pilgrim,—one that would change shapes as often as Portius, to gain a sight of you!”

When he came off, I was at the wings, (being the Mungo of the night,) and stopped him for an explanation. “Jack, what did you say just now about Portius?”—“What! Portius!” said he—“Change shapes as often as Portius,—why, it’s in the book!”—“And who was Portius, may



I ask?"—"Why, Jack Bernard, I didn't think you was so d——d hignerant! why, don't you remember the Marchant of Venice t'other night, where there is a Portius that first is a woman, you know, and then doesn't she change shapes and come on as a man? and then doesn't she change shapes again, and come on as a woman? —that's what it means."

My wife's illness and the manager's defalcation, as my reader must suppose, had considerably involved me; and though in possession of an engagement, I was under some difficulty to proceed to it. A few days before I quitted Dublin, I met Daly on horseback, who stopped me. Having parted in mutual disgust at Cork, and passed each other since without a recognition, this circumstance surprised me. But the feelings of the man had triumphed over those of the actor. "Bernard," said he, stretching out his hand, "all quarrels forgot: we ought to have been better friends and brother actors.—I know how you are situated; and if twenty guineas will be of any service, Kennedy will give them to you, and take your note at your own

time."—He then wished me better fortunes elsewhere, and rode off.

I have mentioned this circumstance, (in common with many others,) not that it could be of any particular interest to my reader (if it were not historically requisite); but as it is well known that there must be a certain portion of every man's book which is heavier and duller than the rest, I would desire that such portion in mine should consist of these little tributes to the *private virtues* of individuals whose public characters are the only links that connect them with public memory.

The next day I dined with John Kemble, who wished to do me the same kindness as Daly; but as this was unnecessary, I received from him instead what was equally serviceable—a letter of introduction to Sir John O'Neil of Shanes Castle.

Having thus brought our disastrous season at Dublin to a close, I think it is high time I should bring this chapter also, and I can do it in no way so amusingly as by relating the mode of Mrs. Gardner's departure, who, though a mar-

ried woman, was fond of very singular adventures.

Mrs. G. was a lady of extravagant habits, and had involved herself in Dublin, in a manner which the conduct of her manager was no excuse for. Receiving a letter from the Haymarket, to say that her services were required, the season being about to open earlier than usual, settlement with her creditors was out of the question; and to obtain their permission to depart without a settlement, seemed equally hopeless; whilst under the present circumstances of the Theatre, a benefit would but have involved her. But she had some friends in Dublin, who, if they would not enable her to pay her creditors, were willing to assist her in eluding them. A scheme was accordingly concerted for her deliverance, and carried into effect in the following manner:—

Early one morning, Mrs. Gardner was pronounced to be very unwell; by breakfast-time she was worse; at noon she was quite dangerous; at evening, past recovery; and at night—dead. No one was permitted to approach her

during this time, but persons concerned in the conspiracy, and certain grave gentlemen, who, by the aid of well-powdered wigs, black breeches and stockings, and gold-headed canes, passed for physicians. The next day, the mournful intelligence was promulgated in the newspapers, to the dismay and regret of numerous tradesmen and money-lenders. An undertaker having been bribed and called in, made the necessary funereal preparations, and by noon that day, in solemn state, the ostensible remains of Mrs. Gardner were carried forth, and deposited in the "tomb of all the Capulets," with a long train of mourners, who carried onions in their handkerchiefs, whilst a lady, who very much *resembled her*, had taken her passage over-night in a Holyhead packet, and in two days afterwards was drinking to Mrs. Gardner's repose, in lodgings near the Strand.

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## CHAPTER X.

1783.—Irish travelling. — Belfast Green-room. — Atkins. — Cherry. — Captain Garvey, the Irish Don Juan, and original of “Paddy Carey.” — Miss Knipe. — Story of her Father. — Another Whitely and Thornton. — Opening Play. — Gurney in Careless: his singing, and female admirers. — Amyas Griffith (the Belfast Critic) and his legs. — La Mash, the fop-servant, and Kitty Frederick: his record of spousal gratitude. — Sir John O’Neil. — Mr. Rice, the old Irish Gentleman. — M’Nat and his “Parkogits.” — New Theatre proposed. — My first management. — Attachment to Ireland. — Geoffrey Galway, a great little actor. — Story of him and Whitely. — His blunders. — Londonderry. — Hard drinking: The “six-bottle men.” — An Irish invitation. — Sligo. — The Castle Inn. — The Duelling Assembly-room. — Impromptu by Mr. Farren (father of the actress). — Le Sieur Ray and his “Cockalorum.” — Sligo “Glee Club.” — Retaliation, and an elegant challenge. — Captain Garvey’s Gaities, and impudence. — My illness. — The two “Wat Tylers.” — Restoration by lime-water: the receipt.

OUR journey to Belfast partook of the common characteristics of Irish travelling in those days. A machine called a buggy was our

conveyance (which in the vermin it contained seemed to justify its designation), drawn by a nondescript collection of bones and hairs, termed in Ireland, with some humour, a horse, before whom the driver used to run with a wisp of hay in his hand, to induce the beast to go forward and bite it (wearing out whips being expensive). The road itself was diversified with ponds of water, called puddles, — and cut up into tolerable footpaths, under the name of ruts ; whilst the immense masses of stone and clay, with which Irish ingenuity, in covering a ditch, had created a hill, made it resemble nothing so much as the hump-distinguished back of the sea-serpent, which it was my fortune to see in America many years afterwards.

I will now proceed, in my usual way, to introduce my reader to our corps at Belfast ; noticing such particulars in each as may contribute to the stores of these pages,—viz.

Atkins, Row, Tyrrel, Cherry, Garvey, Macready, O'Neil, Kane, Kennedy, Hammer-ton, Bernard, Mrs. Atkins, Miss Knipe, Mrs. and Miss Hoskins, and Mrs. Bernard.

Atkins, our head, was a pretty singer and a worthy man, but not a clever manager.—The character and talents of “honest Andrew Cherry” were too well known to a London public to need any reference here:—the anecdotes of our acquaintance shall come in their proper places. Captain Garvey, our “walking gentleman,” deserves some notice. This person was about the most notorious character connected with the Irish Stage, though more on a personal than professional account. He was an Irishman by birth, and had all the distinctions of his country in perfection,—a handsome countenance, a tall and graceful person, a good proportion of calf and back, and a sufficient measure of that impudence which is called ease. His family, who were respectable, had purchased him a commission in a horse-regiment, as an outset; but irregular habits and love of pleasure had led him to the Stage, which, being an itinerant and diversified life, presented more facilities for the gratification of his whims and passions. He had a little patrimony however,

which, with the title of Captain, to get him credit with tailors and tavern-keepers, (the only people who gave him any,) kept him in resources. The aids of dress were never wanting to set off the graces of his person, and an air of fashion enveloped the whole; for, wherever he went, he contrived to partake of the prevailing amusements, and mix in good company. As an actor, Garvey was on a par with the generality of persons who make the Stage a means of subsistence or amusement, and not a pursuit of genius. As a man, he was an equal favourite with the men and women. He was not highly educated or possessed of much mind, but had an abundance of *natural* ability, which, with a good song, some small-talk, and infinite good-humour, led him into all societies, and distinguished him in each. With the men, he would drink, game, sing, swear, run, ride, box, bet, or fight duels all day long; with the women, his accomplishments were not fewer or less fatal. Garvey was the Irish Don Juan: Rochester was a continent character in comparison—a mere



abbot of St. John. He had a wife in every town he visited, and as many concubines as Solomon. Nature erred in making him a Christian,—he should have been born in Turkey, with all the fair prerogatives of a three-tailed Bashaw. I don't know in what consisted his moral strength,—but women he admitted to be his *weakness*. You could hardly stumble on a family in those times (which had a female part) that he had not attacked. His name was a tocsin of terror to all husbands and lovers; and wherever he came, elopements, seductions, and crim-cons were the looked-for and general result. Thus for many years he may be said to have supplied the subject-matter to all the scandalizing tea-drinking parties in the Island. He was, in short, the complete personification of an Irish "fine fellow;" and certainly the most "imposing" character it has ever been my fortune to meet with.

Andrew Cherry, it seems, thought it a pity that such an individual should be lost to posterity, and determined to perpetuate him by

means of the profession he adorned ; which he did, a few years after, by that vulgarized but faithful portrait—Paddy Carey !

Garvey's personal notoriety was the secret of his theatrical success ; men and women would flock to see *him*, and not the character he assumed ; and as he never wanted an engagement in private, a similar good fortune was the result in his employments. To pass on :—Jack Kane, our low comedian, I shall come to by and by. Macready and O'Neil (both living in 1827) were clever in their respective paths ; and Miss Knipe, afterwards Mrs. Cherry, was a pretty girl and a pretty actress.

The father of this latter was a well-known manager in Ireland, distinguished by no small portion of the spirit peculiar to the extinct race of the Whitelys and the Thorntons. If my reader derived any amusement from those worthies, he will forgive me, perhaps, if I introduce the above to his acquaintance.

Knipe was a very plain man, both in his looks and habiliments ; but he had a handsome wife,

who was very fond of dress, as most managers' wives are, that attach a proper importance to their husbands' situations. Arriving at an inn one evening during a journey, Mrs. K. was shown into the parlour with great ceremony, where she ordered supper; but Knipe remained outside to see his horse attended to, and his buggy burnished. Satisfying himself upon the first point, he walked up to the Teddy who was purifying his vehicle, when the latter mistook him for his wife's servant, and said, "'Pon my sowl, honey, you're a mighty fine gintleman, to make me wash your muddy buggy, when I have ever so many delicate plates and dishes to clane in-doors! Take the mop, you divil, and work away at the wheels, whilst I fetch another bucket of water." Knipe, being a fellow of infinite good-humour, laughed at his mistake, and confirmed him in it by complying with his wish.

When Teddy returned, a conversation ensued as to what sort of situation Knipe enjoyed. "You've pretty good wages, I shouldn't doubt, darling?"—"As much money as I can get," said Knipe.—"And does that beautiful lady,

your mistress, give it all to you?"—"No—but she assists me."—"How long have you lived wid her?"—"Three years."—"How long shall you stop?"—"As long as I live."—"Oh, you lucky divil!—sarve that lovely cracher all your life—you should do it for nothing. And is she very kind to you?"—"Very—very fond of me."—"The divil!"—"She couldn't live without me."—"You daun't say so!"—"And a word in your ear."—"Well."—"I'm to sleep with her to-night!"—"Och, hubaboo! Oh, you angel of the sivinth heaven!—what star was you born under?"

Knipe, anticipating no consequences from such an *equivoque*, went in to supper when the buggy was cleaned; but Teddy had been so struck with the beauty of Mrs. K. that he could not restrain his envy at her husband's happiness, and divulged what he had heard to a fellow-servant, who telling it to a second, it was reported to a third, and so proceeded through every male and female link of the domestic machine, till it reached the landlady, who was naturally *shocked*. Knipe was unknown

to her ; and his mean appearance sufficiently established her servant's mistake. She accordingly determined to watch his movements at night, and prevent such a disgrace to her house, if attempted. Mrs. K. retired early to bed ; but her spouse, as was his usual custom, sat up to smoke his pipe, and drink a tumbler of whiskey. At length he took up the light, and followed his wife's steps ; having been informed by her what chamber he was to go to. As he ascended the stairs, he heard whisperings in the passage, and the noise of moving to and fro ; but it was perfectly dark, and he could see nothing. On gaining the landing-place, he perceived the various doors ajar, and was about to proceed to No. 10, when they flew open with a simultaneous clang, and out rushed every domestic in the inn, who surrounded and seized him ; the treacherous Teddy and the infuriated hostess at their head. " Go along, Sir," said she ; " go down-stairs, Sir ; you know, you was to slape over the stable.—Do you think to make a tawdry-house of a respectable inn ?" Knipe, in the utmost consternation, demanded the rea-

son of such treatment; and his wife, who was in bed, called out to him, "My dear! what's the matter?"—"Oh, hould your tongue, Marm," replied the landlady; "you ought to be ashamed of sich doings in a jonteel place of entertainment!—Slape wid your sarvant!—Oh, fie! Bad luck to your taste!"

Knipe now kicked and struggled in the grasp of a dozen Irish wenches and cowboys to little purpose; and the appearance of Mrs. K. at her door, who had jumped up in the greatest alarm, only fortified their hearts, instead of melting them, at such an open evidence of female frailty. To all her addresses, therefore, to let him go, —that he was her husband, &c, they replied by shaking their heads, putting their hands to their faces, and crying, "Fie, fie! Oh you naughty woman! go along:"—and to Knipe: "Get down-stairs, you big blackguard!" A terrible squabble ensued below; and Knipe was eventually released, though not without danger of paying a penalty for his joke.

We opened with "The School for Scandal," myself and wife sustaining Charles and Lady

Teazle ; Macready, Joseph ; Row, Sir Peter ; Cherry, Crabtree ; and Garvey, Careless,—in which he sang the song of " Here's to the Maiden !" and obtained a double *encore*. Its effect upon the audience was no doubt greatly owing to his gallant reputation, which gave the sentiments a sort of personal point ; but, putting this aside, I question whether it has ever been so sung or received since. He gave the line, " And now to the girl that's but one, (eye,) Sir," with infinite humour ; and nothing could be more admirably marked than the transition of his manner in the lines " Here's to the wife with her face full of woe,—And now to the damsel that's merry !" The Olympian ladies were in ecstasies ; and if they could have had their will, I believe, would have given up the play for the song. " Give it us again, Captain Garvey, you jewel ! let us hear your own swate pipe.—There's a leg, Judy ! and there's a back ! —Oh, he's a nate son of the sod !"

The house was well and elegantly attended ; and our season commenced under the most favourable auspices.

In the course of the week, I was introduced to Mr. Rice of Carrickfergus, a great patron of theatricals and a noted *bon-vivant*;—as well as to Mr. Amyas Griffiths, the critical sovereign of Belfast;—and, through the favour of these gentlemen, to the “Philharmonic Society,” a weekly meeting, at which there was as much mirth as music. Mr. Griffiths, though not eminent as a singer, was the leading talker of the evening: he had an original stock of ideas, and great fluency in delivering them. Unhappily, he was deformed both in his back and legs, which procured him from many the title of the modern *Æsop*. One thing, however, distinguished him more than his bodily peculiarities,—a complacency of mind, which could not only tolerate his defects being alluded to, but permit him to laugh at them himself. At the above meeting one evening, he was rattling and sparkling away, with the least crooked leg of the two thrown over the other, (a piece of pardonable policy,) when the conversation happened to turn upon dancing. A wag in company, who knew his good humour, asked him “if he was



fond of the amusement?"—"Yes," he replied, "and mean to subscribe to the winter balls."—"What! with that leg?"—"Ay, with this leg; and, notwithstanding your sneering, I'll bet you a rump and dozen, there's a worse leg in the room."—"Done, done!" cried a dozen voices. Amyas shook the hands of each.—"Now," said his antagonist, with a smile of confidence, "come forward, Gentlemen, and let Mr. Griffiths point out such another limb as that."—"Here it is," he replied; and throwing off his left leg, raised his right in the air, immeasurably more hideous than the other. A general laugh was the result, and the society decided he had fairly won his wager.

In the course of our second week, I was surprised by a visit from La Mash, the fop-servant, who was passing through Belfast on his way to Scotland, accompanied by the well-known Kitty Frederick, a gay and graceful fair one, beautiful, vivacious, and extravagant. La Mash was naturally a fop, though not a polished one: he could not assume

the gentleman, but the gentleman's gentleman fitted him like his clothes. This rendered him superior to Dodd in my "Lord Duke," and inferior in "Sir Benjamin Backbite." But, like Edwin, and unlike Dodd, his acting was the counterpart of his daily deportment, and not the result of minute observation. One would have thought that his mother had been waiting-maid to the Duchess of Kingston, and his father the duster of Lord Chesterfield's clothes. Whilst at Drury Lane, Kitty Frederick had flopped her affections on him, (he was the most elegantly made man I ever saw,) and had run after him to Dublin. I could not, however, but express my surprise, that a person of notoriously expensive habits should have quitted the scene of her resources to join a penniless comedian.

"Whay, ay," said he, "cet ces vary remarkable, but cet ces vaary true; all the world thecnks there ees but one Frederick; and she thecnks—ha! ha!—there ees but one La Mash."

He took a pinch of snuff in saying this, and

his tone and manner under other circumstances, I am sure, would have obtained him a round of applause.

A month after this, I heard that he was incarcerated in Edinburgh, and that Kitty, having emptied her purse, had flown back to the metropolis. There, however, the jailer's daughter fell in love with him, and having some property, he married her, and applied her dowry to his release. La Mash had some good feeling, and in remembrance of the circumstance, drew the picture of a prison window, with himself peeping through the bars, and his wife looking at him and singing the song, "The bird in yonder cage confined!"

After receiving many courtesies from Mr. Rice, he took me over in his carriage to Shane's Castle, to introduce me to Sir John O'Neil, and tender the letter Kemble had given me. Sir John was very fond of the Drama, and had built a theatre, at which his wife (a very clever and entertaining female) and Mr. Rice sustained the principal characters. He had also secured a band, which was always ready either for orches-

tra or pleasure-boat, by making it a *sine quâ non* in the engaging of a servant, that he should play on an instrument.

At Shanes Castle I received much attention ; but Mr. Rice was my best friend, and his conduct was more like that of a father. He was one of those old remaining instances of the liberal and enlightened Irish gentleman, who by the benevolence of his heart and the suavity of his manners rooted like an oak in the affections of his acquaintance, and flourished like an evergreen in the knowledge of the world. I generally dined with him twice a-week, at his house out of town ; and whenever he rode in to the play, it was a pleasurable duty to provide for his comfort. One evening when behind the scenes. he noticed a roasted fowl on the stage, which looked very white and tempting ; and he whispered me that he particularly fancied a wing of the same, with a bottle of porter. I desired him to step up to my dressing-room, and when the scene was over it should be brought to him ; which was accordingly done, and the porter sent for. Mr. Rice sat down to its demolition with

great avidity, and at that moment our stage-keeper M'Nat, whose perquisite the bird was on these occasions, (but whom I intended to remunerate,) missed it, and ran raving about the Theatre, to know where it was gone: when informed, he sprang up the stairs, and pushing open the door, saw Mr. Rice very comfortably seated at the table, with the well-dismembered fowl disappearing before him. That gentleman's presence checked the impending thunder-cloud at this infringement of privilege; and M'Nat jumping down-stairs, with head and heart burning, ran on the stage, (instead of to the manager,) and howled out between rage and sorrow—"Leedies and Jontlemen, Mr. Burnard has stowl my parkegits!"—Here, however, his articulation failed him, and he stood stammering, scraping, and scratching his head, till the house was involved in a roar of laughter. Atkins then called him off, and Doctor Apsley the physician came round to inquire the grounds of such a singular charge. An explanation tended only to heighten its absurdity; and the Doctor was about returning to his party, when Mr. Rice,

hearing the disturbance, called M'Nat up and gave him a crown. The poor fellow's gratitude was overwhelming, and his sense of the aspersion on my character so keen, that, seeing neither propriety nor Mr. Atkins, he ran on the stage again, and said, "Leedies and Jontlemen, I beg to inform you that Mr. Bur-nard has not stowl my parkegits!"—Another and a louder laugh was the result of this; and the word "my parkegits" became after that very common in Belfast.

Our season proved so successful, that Mr. Atkins was induced to think of building a new theatre for a winter depôt, the old one being small, infirm, and inconvenient; but he was pleased to consider that, in so doing, the services of my wife and self were essential, having established ourselves in the good opinion of the public, far beyond his or our expectations. He proposed terms, therefore, for our continuance with him through the summer and winter ensuing, which I was induced to accept.—But this was not all. As it was necessary that he should be present at Belfast during the building

of the new house, his company in the mean time required a head ; and though I was one of its youngest and latest members, he was further pleased to consider me the most calculated to promote his interests in supplying his place. Though delighted at the thought of management, as every actor is, (for if the love of power is not inherent to human nature, it is the failing of the profession,) I necessarily felt some distrust in my experience, and agreed only to meet his wishes, on the ground of its being universally agreeable to my companions, and that they signed a paper which would invest me with all his authority and privileges. A meeting was accordingly called, the matter proposed, and, after a few wry faces from Row only, agreed to. Cherry, who I expected would have expressed and experienced the most disappointment, happened at that time to be particularly engaged in combating Captain Garvey, to gain the hand of Miss Knipe. He therefore sighed for management of a softer kind, and to his joy, as well as mine, he succeeded. Miss K. was by no means blind to the fascinations of the Captain, but

somehow had no inclination to become the sixteenth Mrs. Shuffleton.

Independently, however, of all professional or pecuniary prospects, I had many personal motives for continuing my stay in Ireland. Never was a being more truly enchanted with a new country, than I on that occasion. Whether in considering the sociability and generosity of the upper orders, or the humour of the lower ones, the Irish character seemed to combine all the desideratums of the convivialist,—Ireland to be the *ultima Thule* of the comedian's wanderings.

The foundation of the Theatre was therefore laid before the season concluded, and, under my management, the company proceeded to Londonderry for a month.

Here, in lieu of Hammerton and Kennedy, who went to other engagements, we received the services of a Mr. Geoffry Galway, a hair-dresser by trade, and an actor by profession, who was famous for playing little parts. Colley Cibber has immortalized his archetype. Galway's best characters were—the Murderer in Macbeth,



the Apothecary in *Romeo and Juliet*, and the Player King in *Hamlet*; upon his success in which he would plume himself with as much pride as though he had performed the heroes of the dramas. He had received his dramatic tuition under that human curiosity Jemmy Whitely, (perpetuated to the latest posterity in these pages,) and on one occasion the following occurred: — When representing the Player King, he stepped forward to repeat the lines—

“ For us and for our trage-dy,  
Here stooping to your clemen-cy,  
We beg your hearing patient-ly.”

Here he should have rested with Shakspeare; but genius was on the wing, and he could not bring the eagle-bird to earth; therefore he continued—

“ And if on this we may rely,  
Why, we ’ll be with you by and by.”

At which Whitely, who lay on the ground as *Hamlet*, snarled out, loud enough to be heard by all the audience—

“ And if on pay-day you rely,  
Take care I stop no sala-ry :”—

thus justifying the rhyme by a very serious reason.

Galway was also celebrated for his disposition to blunder; though, being an Irishman, this may seem an Irish remark. When previously with Atkins, it had been his office of an evening to see Mrs. Atkins home, whenever her duties concluded before the performance. On these occasions he was sure to make some mistake, which would afford food for merriment the next morning. Galway's hat was growing venerable and grey; and Atkins promised him a new one, on condition that he did not make a blunder for the day. This was a pleasant wager to accept, and Geoffry thought it an easy one to perform. He little knew what an arrant knave was his tongue to the interests of his head; the covering of the one did not touch the other. He resolved however to speak but in monosyllables that day; and, notwithstanding the attempts that were made to enthral him, succeeded in maintaining his claim to rationality and single meaning. But at night, as he was lighting Mrs. Atkins down the steps to the

street, he held the lantern in an awkward position, and the flame was extinguished. "There, Madam," said he, "now we are all of a colour, like a harlequin's jacket."—"Ah, Geoffry," said Mrs. Atkins, laughing, "you have lost your hat."—"By the powers! I have," he answered, "before I had got it!"

At Londonderry I experienced the same cordial and generous reception in private life which had marked my stay at Belfast; but I was here led to observe, for the first time, the hard-drinking which prevailed in the interior. At the table of Mr. Rice, Sir John O'Neil, and the Belfast society in general, it was the custom to put a bottle of wine at each person's elbow, and let him fill as he pleased; but here were particular meetings, where bumpers were drunk for the evening out of half-pint goblets,—which were without a stand, in order to compel the bibber to empty their contents at a draught. This race of convivialists (who, from their strong heads and capacious entrails, were denominated by their brother Bacchanals—the "six-bottle men") were chiefly composed of old fox-hunters and coun-

try 'squires; and, like certain plants, seemed only to be kept alive by perpetual soaking. But these persons were not to be stigmatized as drunkards: their drink was claret, a light wine (wanting its modern spirit, brandy); and possessed of a more than ordinary deadness of constitution, habit had rendered this extraordinary means of vivification harmless. Those who suffered from their system were strangers who had not been schooled in it (and in this way the old saying of "killing with kindness" was very literally verified); but it was a surprising event indeed if one of the "initiated" could not, after making a cellarage of his stomach, and stowing away his half-dozen, maintain the perpendicularity of his attitude with the most mathematical precision.

I visited a "six-bottle club" but once, and from the headach it cost me, was wise enough ever afterwards to decline an *encore*; but I remember very well being invited to one which held its orgies at a sea-side hamlet, and was very generally attended, with the following highly cheerful inducements:—"Will you come over

to us, Mr. Bur-nard, for a wake? You'll be mightily plased with the fillows you'll mate there, and plinty of variety: for one Sunday night you'll see as merry a set of divils round the table as your heart could desire; and the nixt, more than half will be under the sod, and a set of frish faces will pop into their places.—Will you come, Mr. Bur-nard? ”

Our stay at Londonderry, after paying all expenses, and receiving a sum to proceed with, enabled me to remit five-and-twenty pounds to Atkins.—Our next destination was Sligo, which we reached in every description of vehicle, with the aid of every description of the animal called horse; in every description of weather, and upon every description of road—thoroughfares which, to use a permissible pun, we found to be thorough foul. Notwithstanding this, and that we were bog'd very often, and trusted for instruction to finger-posts, which, from the capacity of their clay sockets, blew round like weathercocks, and only pointed right if the wind was, our difficulties were lightened by the humours of the shebeen-houses we stopped at,

and the ideas of natives distinguished by all the innocence and nakedness of Adam.

At the Castle Inn in Sligo we put up; and the landlord, having been formerly an actor, paid us great attention. His house contained the Sligo Assembly-room, the wainscot of which I observed to be perforated in numerous places with bullet-holes, under which were written different names. I naturally requested an explanation; and my host informed me, that this room being the "largest and natest in the town," whenever its gentlemen fell out, here they took occasion to fall in, and settle their differences in a gentlemanly way. I need not point out the advantages of such a place for such a purpose over the open field, both as respected its retirement and security, and the means it afforded the parties of recording their claims to honour. I would merely assure my reader hereby, that the old joke of "pistols and coffee for two" originated in a very serious truth.

I was soon very comfortably established at a hair-dresser's in the principal street, where, on a

pane of my chamber-window, I read four lines, which induced me to inquire the name and history of their author. I learnt that they had been traced by a Mr. Farren, who had visited Sligo in Shepherd's company the summer previous: a man as distinguished for his superior education and refinement, as was his manager for a brutal and overbearing disposition. No two men, I was informed, ever presented a more perfect reverse; and it was supposed that when smarting under some collision with his superior he wrote the following:—

“How different David's fate from mine!  
His blessed, mine is evil:  
His ‘shepherd’ was the Lord divine,  
My ‘shepherd’ is the Devil.”

This gentleman was the father of that accomplished actress, the late Countess of Derby; and setting aside the intrinsic merit of the impromptu, I was induced to think that if the *pane* could be conveyed to that lady, it would give her some pleasure. With this view, I offered my host a fair sum to extract it; but he would not consent, for he considered a certain luck to

consist in its safe preservation. — “ Mr. Bur-  
nard,” said he, “ ever since Mr. Farren wrote  
those verses, I have niver wanted a lodger !” —  
There was no arguing against this, even with  
the universal language—Spanish !

I had letters of introduction to Mr. John  
Tyler, in Sligo ; Mr. Justice Phibbs, and various  
other heads of families ; so that, in a private re-  
spect, I had as much enjoyment as I could desire ;  
but the wretched state of the business soon dis-  
eased my mind. The inhabitants had all the  
disposition to support the Theatre, but they  
wanted the means,—a predicament that the  
Stage is often placed in in the country ;—and  
had it not been for a review, and a fair-week, I  
must inevitably have closed the doors.—But, even  
then, I was not permitted an exclusive harvest.  
An Irish conjurer and ventriloquist, by the  
name of Ray, but who called himself “ Le Sieur  
Ray,” to blarney his countrymen, (though he  
spoke a brogue thick enough to have cut with a  
knife, as Bowles used to say,) sailed into port  
with us, and divided the market. He cleared  
more by one evening’s exhibition than we by



three,—and won fifty pounds besides, by swimming over a river with a rope about his waist.

This was the impudent dog (the act evidenced his origin) who, exhibiting before their late Majesties, refused to perform his grand deception till the Queen said *cockalorum*, in which he pretended the charm consisted. Her Majesty thought the word either difficult or indelicate, and declined; but the King was so bent upon the great astonishment, that he turned round to her good-naturedly, and said—“Say cockalorum, Charlotte—say cockalorum.”

I need scarcely remark, that the Irish are as musical as they are convivial:—they make the best companions, and they sing the best songs: Every town I had visited contained a “catch and glee-club,” and Sligo could boast of one with no inferior attractions. Through the favour of Mr. Tyler, I was introduced to it, and attended every meeting that my public duties permitted me. One evening I happened to be the only Englishman in the room, and the members took the opportunity of roasting me upon my nationalities, (viz. beef-eating, bell-

ringing, coal-burning, card-playing, &c.) It being my profession to stand forward for the world's amusement, (though rather to be laughed with than laughed at,) I bore this infliction very patiently, till called on by the chairman for a song, when I gave "Paddy and the Proker," which contained more satire upon Ireland in five lines, than all that had been said against England for the evening. As soon as I had commenced however, a gentleman entered the room who had been some time absent from Sligo, and who quietly took a seat by the door, to prevent my interruption. When I concluded, there was a hearty laugh from every one but this gentleman, who, ignorant of my provocation, conceived the song to be an insult to the company: he therefore walked up to the table, filled a glass of wine, and approaching me, said—"Sir, I have listened to your song, and I beg you to consider that I have thrown this glass of wine in your face." This was a direct challenge, and though elegantly conveyed, the object certainly thrilled me with a novel and sudden sensation of terror. Some words ensued,

and Mr. Tyler rose and went out of the room with my antagonist. I was then informed that his name was Jones, and that he was a dead shot; and I then remembered that Jones was one of the names I had read under a bullet-hole in the "Sligo Assembly-room." In a few minutes Mr. Tyler returned, and said that it was necessary I should fight Mr. Jones, and he was sorry that, being that gentleman's intimate friend, it was out of his power to be my second, but that he would lend me his pistols. A hurried vision now passed before my eyes, of the Sligo Assembly-room, and my name under an ineffectual bullet; but I was pretty well primed at this time, and, despising both danger and reason, replied, that "I had never played the coward but on the stage, and could always act like a gentleman off; the aggrieved party had therefore only to name his time and place, and I would procure a friend and meet him. When Mr. Tyler again quitted the room, the chairman called for the glee of "How shall we mortals spend our hours?" and requested I would take a part in it. I complied, but sang with

little spirit, for the idea of the duel was uppermost, and that pointed out a mode in which I should spend one, and perhaps the last, of my hours, neither as agreeably as in love or in drinking. Before it concluded, Mr. Tyler and his friend returned to the room and took their seats; and the latter, when permitted, filled two glasses of wine, and putting them on a tray, approached me again, accompanied by Mr. Tyler, and begged I would drink a glass of wine with him, and not, as he had said before, consider that I felt it in my face, Mr. Tyler having satisfactorily explained the cause of my singing "Paddy and the Proker," and I having demonstrated no intention to insult, by my willingness to render satisfaction where it had been presumed.

I give my reader leave to imagine, that I took up the glass with more pleasure than I should have done the pistols, and cheerfully swallowed, with its contents, all hopes of perpetuating my name on the wainscot of the "Sligo Assembly-room."

Notwithstanding many serious resolutions to

refrain, in consequence of many serious symptoms of disorder, the temptations of the table were too strong for me, and my health sank under this *spirited* experiment on its strength. I gradually weakened, lost my appetite, and was at length laid up with what is termed "a port fever." A week or two previously, being advised to take exercise as the best means of invigoration, I had purchased a pony; but was deprived of its services owing to the following circumstance:—

A young lady in Sligo, of tolerable family and fortune, had fallen in love with Garvey, and the circumstance reaching his ears by one of those mysterious channels which Cupid only can concert, early one morning he obtained an interview, and prevailed on her to elope with him; but as he had no money to provide for an immediate flight, he secreted her for the day in his lodgings, intending no doubt to obtain the assistance from me. By mid-day, the affair was buzzed about town; and the guardians of the girl, obtaining some clue, went to her hiding-place, where they were certainly received with

extended hands, but hands that clenched pistols;—the owner swearing that their first step on the stairs should be fatal to them. Not doubting his words, they prudently retreated, and waited on me. I sympathized with the worthy people sincerely, and felt it incumbent on my character, both as a man and a manager, that I should give them every assistance towards the recovery of their ward. Stratagem, and not force, was to be employed, (for I knew Garvey too well to consider his threats mere bravado,) and I accordingly proposed that we should return to his lodgings; I would go in alone, and draw Garvey down to some lower room, whilst they (the door having been left ajar) should steal in and carry off the girl.—Fortune, or rather Providence, favoured the plan. Garvey received me without the slightest suspicion, and went into an inner room below, where I contrived to engage him in a profound discussion as to what plays we could cast for the ensuing week, and what plan we could adopt for the invigoration of the business. The guardians, meantime, stole up-stairs to his

sitting-room, secured his pistols, and surprised their ward, who did not require much persuasion to quit the house with them, when her lover's character was laid open. Pride rushed in to the assistance of duty, the moment that honour appeared to be jeopardized by affection : speedily but silently they therefore departed.

My situation during this was by no means enviable : every moment I feared that Garvey would overhear or suspect something ; and I was well assured that a rencontre must produce fatal consequences. At length a cough in the passage informed me that all was successfully accomplished, and my performance might conclude as soon as I pleased. On quitting him, I made the best of my way home ; but the instant Garvey discovered his loss, he ran into the streets and caught a glimpse of the buggy that contained his dear one, as it was rolling out of town. Considering that force only could have occasioned such an act, he resolved to pursue and rescue her ; but he had no horse of his own, and knew not where to hire or borrow one. He then thought of mine, and conceived that,

as I had been a party in wronging him, it would be a refinement of revenge, to make me contribute to his happiness. He accordingly went to my stable in a cool and determined manner, kicked open the door, saddled the pony, and galloped after the fugitives, whom he soon overtook. He at first had intended to shoot the guardians instantly, but second thoughts led him to appeal to the girl, and submit to her decision—"whether or no she accompanied her conductors with her own consent?" She very laconically answered, "Yes;" and he, very chaf-fallen, but satisfied, then wished her a good morning and galloped back to Sligo, where, turning my pony into the stable, with no other covering than its own sheet of foam, he said not a word to me or my groom; and the consequence was, that in ten days the beast became stone-blind. I was thus obliged to part with my purchase for half the sum it cost me: but though Garvey enjoyed this revenge keenly, and I, from the circumstances of the Theatre, could take no reprisal, still the thoughts of having preserved from his fangs an innocent girl, who



might become an affectionate wife, and a tender, careful mother, was some consolation.

Garvey was certainly a most impudent fellow. A few days after this, (and before I fell ill,) he called on me in his usual way, and begged the loan of my dress-hat, being invited to a large party of ladies, and having no chapeau which was good enough for the occasion. I did not like to refuse him, but complied only on condition of the hat being returned to me the first thing next morning. I could not, however, restrain my surprise that he should dare show his face among females after the late affair; but he smiled, and replied that "that same affair had procured him the invitation." The next morning I saw my hat, sure enough; but it was stuck on one side of Captain Garvey's powdered and pomatumed head, as he strutted by my window, arrayed in scarlet coat, buckskin breeches, and top-boots; one hand knuckled on his hip,—the other twirling "a twig," which was by no means an incipient "shilclagh." I instantly threw up the sash, and called after him. "Oh, you want your hat, do

you?" said he—"why then, borrow, my darling, as I did!"—with which he walked on.

Four-and-twenty hours after I took to my bed, I was pronounced to be at Death's door : this was a pleasant situation for my wife and the company, as, in the event of my dissolution, nothing could be done for their relief till Atkins had been apprized. But my constitution was powerful, and it pleased Providence that life should linger in me. In the mean time, a corps of volunteers arrived in Sligo, and the Theatre (my companion in decline) received some renovation.

Mr. Tyler had a brother Watkins, who commanded in this body, and was invariably present in our boxes: this gave rise to a droll coincidence.

Cherry was playing Lingo in "The Agreeable Surprise" one evening, and when he came to the question to Cowslip—"You never heard of the great heroes of antiquity, Homer, Heliogabalus, Moses, and Wat Tyler?" the audience laughed loudly, and turned their eyes upon Captain Wat Tyler in the boxes. Cherry was known to be in the habit of introducing jokes of his

own; and the gallant officer, concluding this to be such a one, left his seat when the act was over, and went behind the scenes, where he desired Dick Row, our prompter, to let him look at the book. He was greatly agitated, and Row in an instant surmised the cause. "Sir," said he, as the Captain turned over the leaves hurriedly, his face burning, and throat choaking with indignation, "Mr. Cherry spoke the author."—"Indeed, Sir!" replied the Son of Mars; "I'm afraid not, Sir—I'm afraid not; and by St. Patrick and the seven holy stars! if he dared to—I—eh—" At this moment he had found the right place, and the words met his eye: his features instantly relaxed into a comical smile, and, looking at Row, he exclaimed, "By the powers! there's two of us, sure enough!—Mr. Cherry, Sir, was correct, and I beg you ten thousand pardons for this intrusion:" saying which, he returned the book, made an elegant bow, and retreated.

My health not immediately mending, the nature of my disease led every one to conclude there were little hopes of my recovery, though

with the best of advice; and I was favoured with visits from most of my acquaintance, who came with a truly friendly motive, namely, to make my mind easy:—one offering to convey my last wishes to my family, being on the point of proceeding to England; another promising to see my wife safe to Belfast;—a third giving his honour that I should be comfortably put to bed in Sligo churchyard, and that the “Catch and Glee Club” should raise a stone to my memory.

The most comfortable visit I received was from a physician who rode in to see me from an adjacent village: he was very fond of theatricals—had witnessed my efforts, and on one occasion dined with me in public; and he said that he could not but feel sorry at the idea of so merry a fellow as myself going out of the world when I was beginning to be of so much service to those who were in it. He proposed therefore that I should take, night and morning, a draught he had brought with him, which would not interfere with my regular medicines, and might have a more favourable effect. I thanked

him for his kindness, and placing an implicit reliance on his ability (as we always do on these occasions), complied with his request. In two days time he called again, and found me much better; a farther supply of the liquid was left me, and my spirits began to revive. The report soon circulated; and my regular physician, attributing the change to his own prescriptions, congratulated himself, was congratulated by others, and expected to be congratulated by me, upon his extraordinary skill. In his case, I thought that, "Ignorance being bliss, 'twould be folly to be wise," and therefore kept him in the dark; whilst my unknown friend continuing to pay his visits and bring his restorative, in less than a fortnight raised me up from my bed, led me into the street, placed me once more on the stage, and even gave me the ability to play a game at cricket. My welcome from the public was equally warm on the boards and in the street; and the worthy man who had performed this almost miraculous cure, so far from accepting any recompense for his services, gave me the receipt of the means by which he had saved me,

and which I here subjoin for the benefit of those who may be placed in a similar situation ; viz.—“ Two pounds of lime steeped in three quarts of water, twenty hours ; two wine-glasses to be taken night and morning.”

## CHAPTER XI.

Sligo. — A Shebeen-house. — Irish sermon. — Original impromptu by Pope. — Ride to Derry. — A stoical quadruped. — An Irishman's experiment. — Derry. — The Earl of Bristol: Anecdote of him and his valet. — Irish circumlocution. — The resuscitated horse-stealer. — Cherry in the Miser, and the Drummer's wig. — Belfast.

1783-4. — Lady O'Neil's address. — Anthony Pasquin, a travelling painter. — A brief remark. — Offers from Mr. Palmer at Bath, and Vandermere. — Jemmy Fottarel in Tragedy. — "Pass the Box." — Kane's benefit, and Garvey's sentiment. — Irish travelling. — Joe Haynes' logic, in demonstrating the connection between himself and a shabby coat. — Vandermere, a dramatic "Great Unknown." — Début of Mrs. Billington at Waterford, and subsequent success. — Farewell to Ireland.

SHORTLY before our close at Sligo, a party of us proposed to take a ride into the country, the first fine Sunday morning, to view some adjacent spots of renowned picturesque, and return home to dinner. The weather proving fa-

vourable the ensuing Sabbath, we fulfilled our design. Having taken our fill of the beauties of Nature, we then began to think of satisfying another sense—the palate, and rode to a shebeen-house situated on one corner of a common, with the usual distinctions of a red stocking, pipe-stem, and certain characters chalked on a board, signifying to those who could read them, that entertainment was to be had within for man and beast.

The furniture of this caravansera consisted of a large iron pot, two oaken tables, two benches, two chairs, and a whiskey noggin: there was a loft above (attainable by a ladder), upon which the inmates slept; and the space below was divided by a hurdle into two apartments,—the one for their cow and pig, the other for themselves and guests.

On entering the house, we discovered the family at dinner, (eleven in number,)—the father sitting at the top, the mother at the bottom, and the children on each side of a large oaken board, which was scooped out in the middle, like a trough, to receive the contents of the pot of “paratces.” Little holes were cut at equal



distances to contain salt, and a bowl of milk stood on the table; but all the luxuries of meat and beer, bread, knives, and dishes, were dispensed with. They ate as Nature dictated, and as God had given;—they ate, and were satisfied.

The landlord was of the ordinary broad-backed, black-browed breed, with a leg like an elephant's, a face as round as the shield of Douglas, and a mouth which, when open, bore the same proportion to his head, that the sea does to the land. His wife was a sun-browned but well-featured woman, and his young ones (but that they had a sort of impish hilarity about them) were chubby, and bare enough for so many Cupids.

When we asked the landlord what he had to eat,—he said, “Whiskey!”—What he had to drink, — “Whiskey!” — “What we could contrive to stay our stomachs on,—his answer was still—“Whiskey!” There was nothing to be had at this place of entertainment but the one commodity. Luckily, one of our party had brought some sandwiches with him, and though scanty when distributed among six, we

contrived nevertheless to make them a stopgap, and washed them down very pleasantly with some of our host's whiskey.

Strolling into an adjacent lane after this repast, we heard the sound of music at a distance, and presently espied a chapel peeping out amongst a clump of trees. The service was going on when we entered the building, which bore many resemblances to the old abbey at Butterfelt. The congregation was wild and wretched beyond description: Falstaff's regiment was composed of portly, well-clothed men in comparison:—but, in beautiful relief to such a scene, a person rose up in the pulpit, whose sufficiency of stomach and benevolence of aspect would have led me to surmise his occupation, had we met in the open air. He addressed his flock to something like the following effect:—

“My dear children! You know that I have been your Father, and Comforter, and Confessor, these six-and-twenty years next Feast of the Virgin; and you all of you know what trouble I've had in keeping Satan from taking hold

of your sowls. Ay,—you may well look glum ; but you are mighty sure, every son of Adam amongst you, that I have worked hard enough. But will you never lave off your abominable tricks? Will you never grow obedient? What ! you think you may sin as you plase the whole week long, and come to me for absolution at the end of it ! Then I tell you what, darlings—you won't get it !—Arrah now, Mr. Pat Maloney, why did you cock your eye on the pulpit just then? I didn't say I meant you ; but now you'll give me lave to suppose so.—And you, Mr. Philip O'Shugnessy,—you are making a great bother with your nose and throat, as if you had a big could : wait a bit, darling ; I'll come to you presently, and mind if I don't tickle your rotten conscience to some tune !

“ Does any one know Judy Bryant ?—Oh, to be sure, everybody knows poor Judy ; and yet I dare say some of you will pritind to tell me that you never heard or saw such a cracher in all your born days. Now, couldn't poor Judy hang her blanket out to dry—her ounly blanket, on her own palings, but that the Divil must put

it into the heads of certain parsons, whom I have at this moment in my eye, to take a fancy to the same?—Well, Murtock O'Donnel, I didn't say it was you did it, although you do look so fidgety and flustered;—nor you, Barney Mac Shane; but you remember I said I had the parson in my eye, do you?—And you, Meggy Flanagan,—you can't sit asy in your sate either: yet who would suspect you, that have got a comfortable home, and your husband Teddy one of the best cobblers in the country?" He now deepened his voice, and threw into his manner a very impressive solemnity. "Remember what I have said, my children!—Poor Judy Bryant has lost her blanket! I have the big thafe before me that stowl it; and if it is not returned to her before to-morrow morning, I'll excommunicate him and all that belong to him; and I'll have nothing more to do with him in this world or the next!"

The terrific yell which was now sent forth by the "children," drove us forth from the chapel; but with the impression on our minds,

that the being who could thus combine the duties of the spiritual and civil magistrate, was deserving in the highest degree of the public esteem ; for, however Philosophy might cavil at the means he employed, Justice was benefited by the ends he obtained.

At Sligo I was introduced by Mr. Tyler to a Mr. De la Court, an elderly gentleman of refined manners and truly enlightened understanding. He had formerly lived in London, mixed in the best circles, and been a companion of Pope, by whom he was in possession of an original impromptu upon a lady known to both, who had retained to an advanced age the bloom of youth in her countenance. He was kind enough to permit me to copy this ; and if thought out of place in these pages, my reader perhaps will excuse its introduction.

“ Celia, we know, is sixty-five,  
Yet Celia’s face is seventeen :  
Thus Winter in her breast must live,  
Whilst Summer on her face is seen.

“ How cruel Celia’s fate ! who hence  
Our hearts’ devotion cannot try ;—  
Too pretty for our reverence,  
Too ancient for our gallantry.”

The election at Sligo brought up our business with several good houses, and gave most of us profitable benefits. I was thus enabled to quit the town in comfort and reputation, grateful for the many kindnesses I had received in it, and not forgetful of the lesson in regard to drinking.

The Belfast Theatre not being ready to receive us, we had to return to Londonderry for a fortnight. My wife and the ladies I sent forward in a car. The company proceeded agreeably to their own means and inclinations, and I only remained to see off the theatrical luggage.

My own means of conveyance was a horse, or pony ;—a singularly stubby, shaggy animal, as round as a barrel, but so low, that my legs were in imminent peril of sounding each puddle we passed. He was indeed an elegant

extra-sized pig; though, from his slow and solemn pace, he had one of the characteristics of a cow, or some other creature of the ruminative genus.

My ride on this occasion was the most uncomfortable I can remember in the whole course of my wanderings. When I had advanced about five miles on my journey, I recollected I had left behind me my wife's lapdog, and in a spousal fit of good-humour turned back to obtain it. The morning was rather hazy when I set out, but before I was again on my track a drizzling rain came on. The dog was a miniature of my horse—a fusby little fellow, too heavy to be carried, and too fat to run fast. It was necessary therefore that my pace did not exceed his; but of this there was no fear. I do not believe my Bucephalus could have been stimulated to more than the accomplishment of four miles an hour, had he been charged by a regiment of infantry with fixed bayonets. I certainly never had a suspicion of the truth of the transmigration of souls till then; and then I did think that the spirit of the great Brutus inhabited that little brute, or

that I was bestriding Cato, or Fabius, (who “conquered by *delay*,”) or some other noble Roman or Greek, such a stoical indifference did the creature manifest to all my jerks, blows, kicks, and curses,—so invincible was his resolution to maintain the regularity of his movements. The result is obvious: I was very soon drenched to the skin; and the shower establishing itself as a real rain, my hat acquired the nature of a piece of sponge,—and my clothes, of so much sticking-plaster.—But the measure of my difficulties was not yet full. On descending a hill, my girths gave way, which it took me ten minutes to adjust (with as much comfort as if I had been standing under the falls of Niagara); and a little farther on, my courser cast a shoe. I was thus obliged to take refuge in the first hovel I came to, where I luckily obtained a hammer and nails, some whiskey, and a warm fire. When the weather had moderated a little, I again proceeded, but discovered that my companion had done his day’s work, as far as running was concerned; and was actually obliged to dismount and lead him to the next



town, (Bally something,) where all my wants were supplied, and I was enabled to dispense with my present mode of conveyance. The laziness of this little beast I have never forgotten ; and once or twice during the ride, I was upon the eve of trying the same experiment as a certain "offspring of Erin," who used to go to market upon a similarly snail-paced quadruped, and who bethought him, if the "cracher" was so slow when proceeding in the usual way, his movements might be quickened by inverting his position, and scudding him, as the Dutchman does his scow—tail first. His reason for this was rather feasible ; for a friend coming up as he was about to commence this retrograde progression, and inquiring why he had put the jewels behind—before ? he replied, "Why, you see, I want to get to market early to-day, and I mane to back him forwards a bit, bekase when we used to go to town head first, Barney always *set his face against it !*"

At Londonderry, our fortnight's performances were got up by subscription, and the first and noblest was the Bishop of Derry, Earl of Bris-

tol, brother of the husband of the Duchess of Kingston.

He was a great patron of theatricals, and his favourite conversation was upon the London Stage. He was very fond of contrasting the merits of its then popular performers with those of a school which had passed away. Being pleased to take particular notice of me, I had opportunities at his own table of estimating his talents. A more agreeable companion I never met with, nor a more well-informed man; and I have no doubt he was as liberal as he was intelligent; but what qualified him to be a Bishop, more than his competency to spend eighteen thousand a-year, I never could discover. The Earl was a great *bon-vivant*, and the relaxations he indulged in called for certain invigorations to balance the account. But his constitution was like a dilapidated building,—continual repair only preserved the form, whilst it added nothing to the strength. His physician had advised early rising, and a walk on the ramparts, as the best bracers, or, in case of unfavourable weather—a cold bath; and for some

time the Earl had adopted and been benefited by such means. He had an Irish giant for a valet, a fellow as muscular as he was tall, who had been in his service many years, and discharged the duties of waking him in the morning, and waiting on him to the ramparts or the bath. One morning the Earl felt very drowsy, (having not long been in bed,) and told Teddy, when the latter disturbed him, to begone. "Plase, Sir," said the servant, "I know it rains very well; but if your honor won't walk, you can take the bath, you know." The Earl however would not rise at all, and Teddy quitted the room. At breakfast the former felt unwell, and, attributing it to his non-compliance with his usual custom, blamed his domestic for not compelling him to bathe, whether he wished it or not, knowing that such an act was conducive to his master's health.

"Teddy," said he, "you know what benefit I have derived from bathing; and you know very well, that when a man is inclined to sleep, he'll sacrifice any thing to enjoy his bed. An-

other morning, when you find me unwilling to rise, take me up in your arms—you are strong enough—and carry me to the bath !”—“ Very well, Sir,” said Teddy, “ I ’ll remember.”

The following morning it rained again, and Teddy, true to his duty, came into the Earl’s chamber, and awoke him to take the bath ; but his master was as little inclined to rise on this occasion as before, and moreover felt displeased at being so hastily summoned from a beautiful pantomime that was performing in the play-house of his brain. But Teddy was not to be put off or got rid of, and insisted on his getting up. “ I tell you I shall not rise this morning, Sir,” said the Earl.—“ But you must rise.”—“ *Must !* Get out of the room, you rascal !”—“ By the powers ! I ’ll do no such thing.”—“ Am I not your master ?”—“ Don’t I know it is for your health ?”—“ I command you, Sir !”—“ Yes, —but, please your Grace, you are either not awake now, or you’re not sensible of what you’re saying ; and if I let you slape now, don’t I know very well that at breakfast you ’ll be scowlding me

again, as you did yesterday? So, come along, my Lord; 'tis no use your kicking and bawling; you must come and bathe yourself." Saying which, he quietly took the Earl up in his arms, as he would have done a lapdog, and carrying him to the tub, plumped him in it. The latter knowing it was no use to struggle in such a situation, when the shock was over, called for soap and towels.

At breakfast, the Earl was rather gloomy, and could not acquaint his family with the cause till Teddy came in, who, nodding his head and rubbing his hands in great glee, approached him and said, "Well, my Lord, I managed to *wake* you this morning!" At these words, said he to me, my features relaxed, and I could not deny the poor fellow the approbation he expected.

At Derry we were joined by a Mr. Knipe, brother to Mrs. Cherry; a kind of dramatic expletive, as regarded talent,—for he filled out the *number*, without expressing any *sense*. But the Volunteers, who were now gathering all over Ireland, rendered this place

very lively, and benefited the Theatre. The “band” volunteered for our orchestra, and the officers were very regular in their attendance to the boxes. Here I was again beset with invitations; but the warning I had received at Sligo rendered me cautious in accepting more than health as well as duty permitted.

If the Irish are to be distinguished as a convivial and a musical, they must also be noted as a circumlocutory people. Observing one day an unusual commotion in the streets of Derry, I inquired of a bystander the reason; and he, with a mellifluous brogue, replied in the following metaphorical manner:—“The rason, Sir! Why, you see that Justice and little Larry O’Hone the carpenter have been putting up a picture-frame at the end of the strate yonder, and they are going to hang one of ‘Adam’s copies’ in it.”—“What’s that?”—“Why, poor Murdock O’Donnel.”—“Oh, there’s a man to be hung?”—“Do they put up a gallows for any other purpose?”—“What’s his offence?”—“No offence, your honor; it was only a liberty he took.”—“Well, what was the liberty?”—

“Why, you see, Sirr, poor Murdock was in delicate health, and his physician advised that he should take exercise on horseback; and so, having no horse of his own, he borrowed one from Squire Doyle’s paddock; and no sooner was he on its showlders, than the Divil put it into the cracher’s head to go over to Kellogreen cattle-fair, where he had a good many acquaintances; and when he was got there, Murdock spied a friend at the door of a shebeen-house, and left the animal grazing outside, whilst he went in to have a thimbleful of whiskey; and then, you see, they got frisky, and had another, and another, till poor Murdock went to slape on the binch; and when he wouke up, he found the cracher gone, and his pocket stuffed full with a big lump of money.”—“In short,” said I, “you mean to say he has been horse-stealing?”—“Why, Sirr,” he replied, stammering and scratching his head, “they call it so in England!”

After hanging his appointed time, this unfortunate Murdock was cut down and conveyed away by his friends to an adjacent house, where, it being discovered that his neck was not broken,

a physician was called in, and the means of resuscitation were successfully employed. He then sank into a sound sleep, and was ordered to be given a cup of new milk whenever he woke and was thirsty. Two female relatives sat up with him; and the worthy Doctor sent them a bottle of whiskey to cheer the tedium of the night; but they in drinking healths to one and the other's families, and long life in especial to Murdock, very soon became too sociable to be discreet.

When Murdock awoke, he rubbed his eyes, and looking round him wildly, exclaimed—"Where am I, dear lady,—in Purgatory?"—"No, no, honey Murdock: don't you know Judy Flin's cabin,—your own sister Judy?"—"And is that you, Judy?—and is this a bed?" he inquired, quite bewildered. "To be sure it is Judy," said she,—"and this a bed, though it is not as good a one as I could wish;—and here's Molly Dorgan, your own cousin jarman; and we have been both drinking your health, Murdock, and long life to you, wid the whiskey the Doctor sent us to kape the ould blue Divil from tazing us."—"But sure I was hangt,



Judy," said he. "Sure enough, darling, for not returning Farmer Doyle's pony that you borrowed: but Doctor Mulready, blissings on him! who brought you into the world five-and-twenty years ago, when your mother Katty was put into the straw, has brought you alive agin, after you had been made the picture of the 'slaping beauty' on the Government sign-post."—"Why, then," replied Murdock with a deep sigh, "I don't thank Doctor Mulready;—I was very asy where I was. Father O'Connel had forgiven me my sins; my misery was all over, and a swate slape had begun; and here have you brought me back to this dirty world to beg, steal, and starve, as I have done before.—I don't thank you, Judy: you never ax'd my consent.—And by the powers! since Doctor Mulready has had me born over agin, he shall be at the expinse of bringing me up!"

To mollify Murdock's discontent at his restoration, the women handed him the whiskey-bottle, (though strictly enjoined by the Doctor to give him nothing but milk,) which he seizing with desperation, drained at a draught,

and the liquor meeting the wind in his throat, he struggled, gurgled, and fell back upon the bed, beyond the skill of Doctor Mulready, to revive again.

Receiving a letter from Atkins, to say all was prepared for our reception, I hurried the close of our visit, and put up the benefits. Cherry played the "Miser" for his, which was certainly not as good a performance as Ryder's, nor exactly in his way; since he was most at home where a broad laugh was to be elicited. A member of our "volunteer" band, who played the drum, was a very tall, thin, conspicuous figure, and in the intervals of his duties he used to turn his back to the stage, and place himself in a commanding attitude, which was owing, I believe, partly to his contempt for our abilities, and partly with the view of dividing with us the public attention. We had often noticed this among ourselves, and laughed at the fellow; and one evening it was discovered that the tall and vain musician wore a wig.

Cherry, finding that "The Miser" did not "take," to use a Stage phrase, resolved on some

bold experiment to arouse his lethargic auditors; and in the scene where he discovered his robbery, and ran about inquiring—"Who's got my money?—where is my money?" he bent his head over the pit, and addressed several persons in succession,—“Have you, Sir,—or you,—or you, got my money?” till at length he fixed his eyes on the unobserving drummer, and cried—“You have got my money!”—at which he pounced upon his pericranium as an eagle would swoop upon a sheep, seized the wig, and waving it aloft in triumph, exclaimed, “Here is my money! I have got my money!” and then ran off, leaving the astonished musician with his bald pate shining like the apex of Mont Blanc on a summer's morning. His appearance and Cherry's manner were irresistible: but the experiment succeeded to nearly a fatal issue;—the house was but a temporary erection, and it rocked with the uproar to its very foundation.

I had much pleasure in returning to Belfast, where I possessed many sound friends, as well as pleasant companions; and the Earl of Bristol was pleased to extend the sphere of my ac-

quaintance by various friendly letters. On joining Atkins, I rendered him a satisfactory account of my transactions during the brief period of my authority; and I cannot say that I was unhappy at such a period having ended. Being merely Mr. Atkins' deputy, I had been subjected to many trials of temper and personal submissions by the company, which not unfrequently embittered my public cup of sweets.

We opened our new house with an elegant address, written for the occasion by Lady O'Neil, and spoken by myself. The audience that received it was perhaps the most brilliant that house ever contained.

It was during this winter that I first became acquainted with that Eccentric and Satirist, Anthony Williams, better known under his adopted designation of Pasquin, at this time a travelling portrait-painter, stopping at Belfast to take the likenesses of a few persons he had brought letters to. One of these was Mr. Griffiths, who was so struck with Anthony's conversation during a sitting, that he introduced him to the

“Adelphi Club,” a literary meeting, of which I was a member. Here Pasquin’s conversational talents rendered him a general favourite, and he was employed to paint the Society sitting round a table, which was a large picture, and, as presenting a general resemblance, was valuable at the time, to hang over our mantelpiece; but it was very inferior as a specimen of art. Pasquin, was a much better writer than painter; and the “Children of Thespis” is the evidence he has left behind him. But as he was a man so well known, and for so many years, to the London public, it would be as repugnant to me to dwell upon talents which were always appreciated, as it would be to palliate principles which were always condemned.

My increase of leisure, on returning to the quiet of my former situation, threw me open to a great deal of social temptation; but I had resisted Satan at Derry, when decked with the most alluring smiles of Bacchus, and was not to be overpowered in Belfast. However, I was by no means confident in the strength of the citadel, which had been once sapped, and was still

open to attack; and, fearful lest a fatal result might attend a second struggle, I was induced to tear myself away from this convivial Eden, and accept the proposals of my old manager, Mr. Palmer, who tendered myself and wife a three years' article (to commence with the succeeding winter) for Bath. Bath was the next step to London, and London is the pinnacle which every actor must hope and strive to reach.

It was well that I came to this determination quickly; for Atkins laid siege to me soon after to continue in Belfast, and share with him the management. My summer destination was still undecided, when I received a letter from my friend Vandermerc, stating that he intended opening a new theatre at Waterford at the above period, and would be happy to receive me and Mrs. Bernard. This was an engagement on my way to England. I wrote back, therefore, to accede to his terms, and thus disposed of my remaining time in Ireland.

Jack Kane, who was a great favourite of mine on account of his natural humour, introduced

me one day to an old companion of his, Mr. Fotterel, a Dublin actor of so-so standing in Daly's corps, who being on a furlough for a fortnight, had come to Belfast to spend it. There was a whimsicality about his manners and language, which led me to make some inquiries when he quitted us, and Kane amused me with the following narration.

Fotterel, or Jemmy Fotterel, as he was more familiarly termed, was a great favourite with the Dublin audience, (gallery,) and in private life was notorious for his gambling propensities, which always kept him penniless and shabby. One of the terms used in hazard, (Jemmy's favourite game,) when the person has lost the right of throwing, is, "Pass the Box." One evening Jemmy had the King in Hamlet to play, owing to another actor's indisposition, and though a low comedian, and apparently the most unfit man in the world to assume the buskin, a stern necessity had no master, even in manager Daly. Jemmy however, like many other comedians, (if not most,) had no mean opinion of his tragic powers, and resolved at night to elec-

trify both actors and audience. He thus took the trouble of studying that difficult speech of the King's, which is generally omitted ; but kept his intention secret to prevent an interference, till the moment of its utterance. He then walked forward, and with the slow enunciation and ponderous gravity of Kemble, commenced it. The audience were taken by surprise, and were silent ; but a brawny, coal-heaving looking personage in Mount Olympus, who knew something of Jemmy and his habits, and had always been accustomed to see him in farce, grew uneasy at this dull exhibition ; and when he saw the actor actually going to kneel down, he could not restrain his discontent, but shouted out, “ Oh, bother ! Jemmy Fotterel—Pass the Box—Pass the Box.”

This season proved most productive to Mr. Atkins ; and the company were as well satisfied as himself, with the exception of poor Kane, whose benefit failed *in toto*. Jack was of Belfast origin, and on this account considered the circumstance the more grievous. He had absolutely expected that, without resorting to any



of the measures of his brethren—without either private influence or public attractions, he had merely to put up his name—"Mr. Kane (of Belfast) his night," and it was a necessary consequence, that when the doors had opened, the house would fill. Up to the very day there were no places taken certainly, but this did not dishearten him; he considered it rather as a sign that there would be a rush at night. He was in the house, and having to play in the first piece, divided his time between the green curtain and the dressing-room, in order to go on with his toilette and have a glimpse of his good-fortune together. The awful truth at length burst upon him in the empty state of the house within five minutes of the commencement; and his astonishment was overpowering. He looked like a figure of stone; but this frigidity soon began to melt with disappointment, and Garvey (who was concerned in the performance, but had been out to a country jollification) at that moment came in. Seeing Kane alternately peeping through the curtain, as he wiped the tears

from his eyes, and "making up his face" at a mirror in his hand, the big drops cutting out curious channels through the black and red paint, and his cuff carrying away with every wipe half the rouge he put on, Garvey approached and endeavoured to console him. "Come, come, Jack! be a man; don't snivel like a girl!"—"Like a girl!" replied Kane. "Ay, ay, Mr. Garvey, it's all mighty fine talking: don't you see I shall be ruined by my benefit!—not enough pable to pay the candles! and to sarve me so—Jack Kane! their own Belfast boy!—Och, the Divil fly away with such patronage, say I!" Garvey when half-drunk was always sentimental; and as he was bent upon comforting Kane, rejoined with the manner of Sterne—"Well, Jack, be patient; if you lose your benefit now, you may get one hereafter!" Kane however, mistaking his allusion, got exasperated, and replied, "Pogh, pogh, Mr. Garvey!—benefit hereafter; haven't I always had a benefit *before*!"

I pass over with pleasure what was to me a painful duty—the taking leave of my friends in

Belfast, (particularly Mr. Rice, who honoured me so far as to have my picture taken in Jaffier, and in Clodio, for his study,) since I never intended these pages to be the depository of my private feelings, and friendship and love (whenver they are real) I have always considered things a good deal too sacred to be talked about ; to say nothing of their want of interest to a reader who knew not their objects.

I also pass over the details of our journey to Waterford, Irish travelling being much alike, and having alluded to it sufficiently ; but in explanation of the phenomenon of an Irish traveller's contentment under all the difficulties of a journey, it has often struck me that that logic was available which Joe Haynes made use of in demonstrating the connection that existed between his person and a shabby coat. Lacy his manager, one Saturday morning, paid but half-salaries, and on Sunday encountered Haynes in Fleet-street, wretchedly dressed. Knowing that the wag had more wardrobe than what he had on, Lacy asked him how he could think of exposing himself in such habiliments on a Sun-

day.—“Why, Mr. Lacy,” said Haynes, “I’ll prove to you that there is a necessity why I should not only wear, but be content with these clothes.”—“Do so,” said the manager.—“Well, Sir, you must know, that my pocket always conforms in its dimensions to your treasury,—my breeches naturally accommodate themselves to my pocket,—my coat must appear in character with my breeches, and I must necessarily be content with both !” So with Irish travelling ; the road was adapted to the country, the buggy to the road, the horse to the buggy, and the traveller to both !

It was a curious circumstance that, in the course of this year, it was my lot to speak two “opening Addresses” to two new Theatres.

If I might give way to my own wishes, I should pause here to write an eulogium upon Vandermere—another of the “dramatic Great Unknowns” whom the past century produced ; but I fear that my reader’s sympathy would not be excited, and will rather ensure it by neglecting him to allude to a more fortunate piece of excellence—Mrs. Billington !

This lady had made her *début* in Dublin with Daly, and failed; she now accompanied her husband (who was engaged in our orchestra) to Waterford, with the view of merely singing for benefits and at concerts. Billington was a pleasant and clever man, and I introduced him to the house of a great musical amateur in Waterford, to whom Mr. Rice had given me a letter. Cubit our singer I also took there; and as we were beginning to get up some difficult pieces of music, and wanted a female voice, Billington asked permission to bring his wife, whom till this moment no one had heard of. Young and lovely as she was then, I need hardly describe what was the impression she produced on our party, by a union of the most musical science with the greatest natural gift which the annals of English singing can boast of. Our astonishment was equal to our admiration; and the next day I told Vandermere, who went with me to Billington's lodgings, and heard her sing. There, without an instrument and in a low room, she pleased him sufficiently to obtain the immediate offer of an engagement; but her failure at Dublin

had so discouraged her, that she was fully convinced at this period she should never succeed on the stage. The cause of her failure being very obvious, (that timidity which people of genius at all times feel in their outset,) I volunteered my services to read to her one or two singing characters, as a means of inducing her to study them: my offer was cordially accepted; and but a few mornings had elapsed before she was not only perfect in the words, but the spirit of Rosetta and Clarissa. A stage-rehearsal was now resorted to, and she soon became *au fait* “to the business.” On this acting groundwork, she collected confidence, and gave the manager leave to put her name in the bills. Her success at Waterford was equal to her deserts; yet, strange to say, at the conclusion of the season she was unprovided with an engagement; and Billington, knowing my destination, came to me, to use my interest with Mr. Palmer in procuring him (only) a situation. I accordingly wrote to Bath, and received an answer that the arrangements for the orchestra had been long since completed, but that if Mr. Bil-

lington and wife would join the company, on the ground of making themselves useful, Mr. Palmer could give them three guineas a-week, till something better presented itself. Billington carried this letter to his wife, with the view, as I imagined, of accepting the offer: what circumstances interfered, I know not; but in the Passion-week of the winter following, when I rode up to London to shake hands with some old friends, I met Billington accidentally, and went home with him to congratulate his wife: she had appeared in London, and established herself as the first female English singer of the age. Such is another of the strange transitions with which dramatic life abounds.

And now, having brought the first volume of my history to a conclusion, I bid adieu to Ireland, with the same feelings of regret which influenced me originally; and if my wanderings hitherto, from boyhood to manhood, have produced any pleasure to my reader, perhaps he will accompany me in my next book, to the zenith of my fame and fortune as well as my years; when, should he have not become tired

of the comedian's company, I will propose, as a means of invigorating his health, (after so many hundred miles' travelling,) that he takes a trip with me to America.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

LONDON :  
PRINTED BY SAMUEL BENTLEY,  
Dorset Street, Fleet Street.



























